

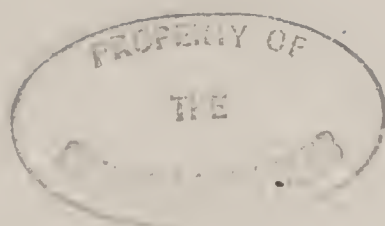
FIRESIDE YARNS

1001 Nights

The Reminiscences of **An Old Coin Man**

Paul Derm Barker





FIRESIDE YARNS

ONE THOUSAND AND ONE NIGHTS

THE REMINISCENCES OF AN OLD COIN MAN

COINS PUZZLE EXPERTS



There must have been a financial depression in the pirate business when these two heart-shaped coins were issued. They're made of brass instead of gold. Together with some English spade guineas of real gold, dated 1787, they were found on Catalina Island by excavators. They are now in the possession of Paul Dore Burks, proprietor of the International Coin Exchange, 231½ West Fourth street, who says they are exciting great interest among coin experts of Los Angeles. Characters on them are in an unknown language. Some of the experts think it possible they were coined by Indian medicine men.

Catalina Island Coins

Besides the above, many other illustrated accounts were published throughout the U. S., (including Popular Mechanics), of the discovery of these odd coins. We hope to be able to publish a translation of their strange inscriptions in the next edition of this book. They have never been deciphered and may now be found on exhibition in Field Museum, Chicago.

Paul Dore Burks
No. 170—



FIRESIDE YARNS



1001 Nights



Reminiscences of AN OLD COIN MAN



Privately Printed and Illustrated by the Author

Paul Dore Burks

FIFTY-FIVE YEARS A COLLECTOR



—FIRST EDITION—

Only Five Hundred Copies—Autographed and Numbered

LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA

—1932—



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Los Angeles, Calif.
December

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To my Father
James Alfred Burks
This Book is Lovingly Dedicated

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INTRODUCTION

The Old Coin Man has been a collector nearly all his life, at any rate since way back in 1876, the One Hundredth Anniversary of the Signing of the Declaration of Independence, when he was but six years of age. He probably inherited the instinct from his father, James Alfred Burks, who had been interested in various hobbies, since early youth.

Jim Burks, as he was called by his many friends and acquaintances, was known far and wide as a collector of most anything in the collecting line, including of course both stamps and coins. It therefore seems exceedingly appropriate that this series of Fireside Yarns, should be dedicated to his memory, especially as they were originally told during 1931, the one hundredth anniversary of his birth.

He first saw the light of day on the third of May of the year 1831, in a little old log cabin, in Mercer County, Kentucky, near the Harrodsburgh Springs, a noted health resort. He married Mary Jane Crawford, a native of Grayson County, Virginia, who was born in 1837. She was the daughter of Daniel Crawford, a pioneer California gold seeker, who was born in Wythe County, Virginia, in 1816. From his letters he must have discovered a rich claim, as he spoke of finding nuggets as big as the end of his thumb, but while returning for a visit he died mysteriously, on the train as it was nearing Grand Island, Nebraska, and his body was removed and buried there. By his untimely death the location of his claim and personal property has always remained a secret, as only a few trinkets as well as dollars were found upon his person, when the coroner examined the remains.

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Only one son out of nine children born to the couple, lived through childhood, he being named after the noted artist, Paul Gustave Dore. The father being a painter in oil, whose creditable works of art were eagerly purchased by residents of the community, doubtless wished his son to follow in his footsteps, and that the name might inspire him to become a real artist.

From early boyhood Jim Burks had been a great reader, obtaining most of his education through that source, and among many other things took up the study of geology. The son never missed an opportunity to accompany him on his frequent expeditions, in search of specimens along that line. Such rare and unusual objects of prehistoric days, were only to be found in certain sections of the country, one of the favored few being Burlington, Iowa, where the son was born, April 5, 1870.

The stone quarries of this locality, afforded a valuable source of supply for the many rare collections of fossils, secured and arranged through the combined efforts of father and son. These were eagerly purchased by two prominent local geologists, Enoch May and Prof. Chas. Waxmouth. Mr. May's son was connected with the San Diego Gas & Electric Corporation, a few years ago, while Prof. Waxmouth was known the world over as an authority, and author of many works on geology. When this great scientist passed away, several car-loads of specimens, which were still on hand, were shipped to Smithsonian Institution according to his wishes.

While on expeditions in search of fossils, many fine Indian relics were found, which were also formed into collections and sold.

In the course of time many interesting hobbies were indulged in, by father and son, who grew to be real chums as years went by. Much pleasure was experienced through collecting and studying some of the many things they became interested in. Some of these were very unusual, as the following partial list will disclose:

Rare coins and stamps, books, papers, pamphlets, pictures, pictorial Civil War covers, almanacs, political documents and election tickets, campaign buttons and badges, nuts, fruit can labels, eye glasses, tobacco tags,

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advertising cards, bird eggs, mounted birds, sea shells and antique furniture.

When the family moved to Keokuk, Iowa, June 22, 1882, this writer's first collection of U. S. stamps, was either lost or stolen, for it never reached its destination. Though this was a terrible disappointment to the young philatelist, a new collection was started immediately, part of which is still in his possession. The family then moved to Quincy, Illinois, where they remained for twenty-three years, and the son became a printer, and was editor and proprietor of a weekly paper, when he became of age. This paper, during the course of five years became a daily and was finally sold to a political organization. During this time he became acquainted with Frederic Haskin, the Internationally known writer, who is now the head of the Bureau of Information, Washington, D. C., who at that time was publishing a Quincy newspaper. When Mr. Haskin discontinued his paper, to travel abroad, in search of matter to be used in syndicate newspaper articles, he sold part of his printing material to yours truly, the writer of these lines, who continued in the printing line until 1905, when he accepted a lucrative position with the International Correspondence Schools. After twelve years with this institution he re-entered the printing business in San Diego, where he took up his residence March 10, 1906, and residing there until 1921 when he came to Los Angeles. While in San Diego he spent some time as editor and advertising manager of Temple Tidings, a Masonic paper.

On arriving in Los Angeles he entered the printing business, on Main street, and during July, 1925, while exhibiting a few coins from his collection in one of the show windows, a young man approached him with some coins to sell. These were purchased at the price at which they were offered and placed in a pile beside the others, in the window. Soon another gentleman entered and asked if any of the coins were for sale. The poorest half of the ones just purchased were offered and quickly purchased at the price the entire lot had cost. Both buyer and seller were so well pleased that from that time on, the printing business was a secondary consideration. The International Coin and Stamp Exchange,

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had its origin at that particular time. From then on coins were placed on sale, plainly marked, which soon attracted many buyers, as well as others who wished to sell. He was soon kept busy from morning till night, mostly in giving free information to callers, although the sales gradually increased, until quite a business was being done.

Readers of this volume can readily understand, the hundreds of interesting incidents, that must have come to the attention of the Old Coin Man, during the years he has been a dealer. Day after day, and year after year the public continued to call, possibly 50,000 or more, each with something, more or less of interest, many with odd stories of coins, stamps or curios.

Of course these cannot all be vouched for as true, but are at least interesting. It would be impossible to run them all down, even if the writer had either the time or inclination to do so. They may be called part fact, part fiction, with some adventure, to make them interesting to those who do not collect. As the number increases the quality will no doubt improve, at least that is the aim of this writer.

If the yarns appearing in this series please the public, another volume will soon appear. They are far from being perfect, but when *Night One Thousand and One* appears in the far distant future, the author hopes it will please every person who reads it. This of course seems impossible, but who can tell? The impossible might in that day and age become possible.

If the goal of *One Thousand and One* is not reached, during the life time of the Old Coin Man, he hopes that Pauline will continue where he left off, with yarns that were told her in years gone by, before it was decided to put them in type, for the pleasure of the future generations.

THE AUTHOR.



FIRESIDE YARNS

ONE THOUSAND AND ONE NIGHTS

THE REMINISCENCES OF AN OLD COIN MAN

Night One

'Twas a cold stormy night in December, dinner was over and the family was seated around the fireplace, watching the flames as they cut capers and the smoke as it curled gracefully towards the chimney. Outside, the wind howled and shrieked, as if all the demons in hades had been turned loose, to roam at will amongst the citizens of the usually peaceful city of Los Angeles. It seemed unusually dark and the rain came down in torrents. It was just the kind of night that a person would not feel at all like venturing out of the house, no matter how urgent was the appointment.

The fire burned so brightly in the old-fashioned fireplace that the lights were turned out, and as the various

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members of the family were comfortably seated in the rockers and on the davenport, all were in a mood to hear a good story. After a few remarks about the terrible storm at least for Southern California, there was a brief lull in the conversation, and at this point one of the members of the family, Pauline, a dark haired girl of 16, remarked in a low voice as half asleep, "Daddy, won't you please tell us a story, like the ones you used to tell me, before I went to high school, and had so much homework to do at night?"

"Do you like my stories, Pauline?"

"I'll say I do, Daddy, and I'll never forget the ones you used to tell me and how much I enjoyed them, and how I used to go to bed at night and think over some of the things you told me, and wonder if I would ever have any of the wonderful experiences like you have had, when I grew old like you."

"Well, Pauline, if you and the rest of the family wish me to, I won't mind telling you a story as the storm is too bad for me to venture out. I had planned to go down to the old Spanish Village this evening to examine some articles found in a box, uncovered by workmen, while excavating a few days ago. The box had been buried for many, many years under Olvera street probably since the early settlement of Los Angeles, and among other things contained a beautiful pair of antique bracelets, made from silver and nicely engraved with seemingly Indian designs. I promised Mrs. Sterling, the originator of the Spanish village, and the owner of the box and its contents, that I would help identify the articles. But, as the weather is so bad, I will postpone my trip."

"Thanks, Daddy, I am sure all of us will enjoy a story a night like this."

As no one ventured an objection, and as grandma and grandpa Brogle, made themselves more comfortable, and mother Burks laid the evening Herald aside, as interested more in what was going to happen than she was of the news of the day, all was set for a story.

"Wait a minute, Daddy, until I get my pencil and pad and I will take your story down in shorthand, for practice, and then I can read it to some of my friends."

"Do you think my stories are interesting enough to be enjoyed by others, people for instance, who do not collect

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coins or stamps, or you might say, those without a hobby of some kind?"

"I surely do Daddy, you know I am not a collector, but I have enjoyed every story you have ever told me, and I am quite sure others would like them, too."

"Very well, if you care to take them down, I may decide to print them, later on, if I find them interesting enough to your friends to warrant the trouble."

"Fine, Daddy, let's print them in book form when we get enough of them, and maybe you will become a great writer, like Mark Twain or Will Rogers."

"There now, Pauline don't kid your daddy, let's cut out this nonsense and get started, before everybody falls to sleep, for I want them to hear at least part of my story."

"All right, I'm ready, let's call your stories, Fireside Yarns, Reminiscences of an Old Coin Man—1001 Nights. This I will call Night No. One."

A MYSTERIOUS OCCURRENCE

"She was young and pretty, and dressed in the most becoming manner as she replaced her box, turned the key in the lock and removed it slowly, as if in deep thought, then returned it to the lady in charge of the safety deposit department, in the basement of the Bank of America, on the corner of Fourth and Spring Streets, Los Angeles, California.

Before replacing the box she had spent some time going over the contents, and at one time, if you could have been a mouse, you might have seen her press a small object of gold to her ruby lips, then place it in her purse, with a number of papers she had previously been inspecting.

After she had returned the key she mounted the steps, and having written out a check at one of the desks on the main floor, she stepped to one of the tellers' windows, and was handed quite a roll of crisp, new silver certificates. After placing these carefully in her purse with the articles she had removed from her deposit box, she was soon on her way home.

At the corner of Fourth and Broadway she boarded a yellow car, one of the older styles, with long seats at the sides, and finding room at the front of the inside section, she sat down.

Soon these side seats were both comfortably filled and

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the aisle was also becoming crowded, when an old woman, who had boarded the car at the same corner as the young lady, although unnoticed by her, worked her way towards the front. She had first selected a seat in the rear outside section but now appeared directly in front of the stylishly dressed young lady, who was comfortably seated, and reading the afternoon Herald. As new arrivals passed through the car on their way to the front the old woman pressed against the young lady, until the latter's attention was attracted to her, standing there as if weary and longing for a seat.

As the trip progressed and no one offered her a seat, the young lady finally crowded over towards her neighbor and invited her to sit down. As this was taking place other passengers adjusted themselves, and while there was room, all were pretty well crowded. Under the circumstances no one seemed to mind the inconvenience they were put to, and the young lady, with a sigh of relief, turned her attention back to the paper she had been reading, and soon was unconscious of her surroundings. Her expensive purse lay safely in her lap, her paper completely hiding it from the view of the surrounding passengers.

As the motorman stopped and started the car the old woman would lean against her benefactor, sometimes even so hard as to cause the latter to feel sorry for her, and wonder if she was hungry. The thought came to her that she might some day be old and weak like the old woman, and suffer for want of food, and she had about made up her mind to slip her a couple of dollar bills.

Just at this time, the car having reached the residence section, and several passengers had boarded it, and were crowding through the car, the old woman hurriedly jumped up, and headed for the exit, as if she had passed the street she wanted. Another passenger immediately took the seat just vacated, before the gap was closed.

About this time the young lady, absent-mindedly, placed her hand upon her purse underneath the paper she was still reading, and found it open, and the contents missing. She realized she had been robbed. Those around her were startled by a cry of surprise, which she could not suppress. They quickly saw that she had lost something as she was looking into her empty purse.

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Recovering from her shock, she asked someone to call the conductor, to whom she explained her predicament.

The passengers were requested to stay where they were until the matter was straightened out, and the car was stopped and all those in the vicinity of the young lady were questioned. While this was going on some one suggested that the old woman who had left the car in such a hurry, several blocks back, might have been the guilty one. She was the only one that had left the car from the inside section, as far as anyone knew, and as she had sat next to the lady it seemed natural that she was in all probability, the thief.

An elderly gentleman, who sat next to the old woman did not agree with the rest of the passengers and the conductor, for he had noticed that she held her hands folded quietly in her lap most of the time. She raised one arm once in order to wipe her nose, but returned it directly to her lap again. Her other arm seemed paralyzed as she only moved it an inch or so during the entire time she sat next to him. A gentleman standing in the aisle verified the elderly man's statement. That settled the matter in the minds of all, and the young lady objected to the conductor searching the passengers, although all seemed more than willing to be searched. The old lady being the only one that had been under suspicion, and as an alibi was proved for her by the two passengers, the problem was not by any means solved.

The conductor secured the names of those in that end of the car and advised the young lady to notify the police as soon as possible, also the bank's detective. He was convinced in his own mind she had been robbed before entering his car, possibly while about to board it, as it could be most easily accomplished at that time, and with the least chance of being detected.

The passengers seemed greatly grieved over her misfortune and several even went so far as to offer her financial assistance if she needed it. She politely and graciously refused, stating that she did not care so much for the \$300 in currency that was missing but the papers and other articles were so valuable, only to her, that it nearly broke her heart to lose them. She would give anything to get them back, without the money, and no questions would be asked.

On reaching her home she notified the police of her loss, and gave them a description of the contents of her purse, but did not say anything about the commotion on the car, simply stating that she had been robbed on her way from the bank to the car. She mentioned the \$300 in currency, a Mexican gold coin, a number of valuable papers and other trinkets, hardly worth mentioning.

Of course there was nothing done by the police in the way of recovering the lost articles, as nothing was said about the incident on the car, and as they had absolutely no clue to work on nothing was ever accomplished by them.

THE COIN WITH A RING

One quiet afternoon, during the summer of 1928, as I was engaged in cataloging some coins I had just purchased, my attention was attracted to the front of my place of business by an old woman, with a sharp pointed nose, and quite dissipated in looks, who inquired as I approached the show-case: "What will you give me for this?"

She placed a coin on the show-case, and stood waiting for an offer. I did not pick the coin up but glanced at what looked like a 20 peso Mexican gold piece. It had a small ring soldered to the edge, with one link of a chain attached to it.

"I'm sorry, madam, but I am not interested in your coin," I remarked. "It is just a current Mexican gold piece, which commands no premium, and furthermore it has a ring soldered to the edge, which would make it valueless to a collector, and only saleable as an article of jewelry or for its gold content.

She quickly picked it up, thrust it into my hand and asked me to make her some kind of an offer as she needed the money very much. On having it in my hand I noticed at once that it was much lighter than a gold coin of that size should be. It looked and felt genuine, excepting its weight it was to all appearance a regular Mexican gold piece. I realized that it was genuine, but had been hollowed out by some jeweler, and I immediately became interested.

"How much do you want for the coin," I enquired.

"Ten dollars," she answered, "There must be that much gold in it."

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"It is not worth that much to me, but I will give you seven dollars for it."

As she seemed more than anxious to take that amount, the deal was soon closed, and as was my custom in purchasing anything of that nature from strangers, I insisted that she write her name and address on a card for my files. I also secured all the information I could from her, as to where she had gotten it, and whether she had tried to dispose of it elsewhere.

"I found it on the street," she said, "and tried to sell it at a bank, but they said it was counterfeit, so I brought it to you."

After she had gone I immediately set about, trying to find a way to open it, as I was positive it was hollow, and was very curious as to its secret. I had run across other coins that were hollow and which were opened in various ways, and although I spent lots of time in doing so, I had never failed to find their secret. (I will tell you some interesting stories about those coins later on, if you do not tire of listening to them.)

To begin with, I pressed upon every possible spot on both sides, without success. I next examined the edge thoroughly but could not find the slightest crack or anything else that looked suspicious. Of course this required much time and patience. I spent many hours fooling with it, thinking that I might just stumble upon its secret. I finally came to the conclusion I wasn't as smart as I thought I was, and gave it up as a hopeless task.

That night I lay in bed studying the matter over as I had often done before, when I had some problem I could not solve, and I decided the ring must have something to do with opening the coin, although I had often fooled with it, without accomplishing a thing. I fell asleep with this idea upon my mind.

On reaching my office the next morning I tackled the job again, along that line, and kept it up off and on all day. The loose ring attached to the one soldered to the coin, was not entirely round, but at one place came to a blunt point, though not at all sharp, still enough of a point to press against the edge of the coin, at that particular spot. I had tried pressing it at this place before, but as nothing happened I thought there was nothing to it, and consequently turned my attention to some other part.

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I now pressed in every conceivable spot the point on the ring could reach, and as hard as possible, when all of a sudden the lid or side of the coin flew up, affording me the utmost pleasure, as I had finally solved the problem, and discovered the secret.

I was rewarded by finding the photo of a distinguished looking gentleman, in the back of the hollowed out coin, and after further investigation, discovered back of this picture, another of a beautiful young lady.

Having removed both pictures carefully, with the aid of my pocket knife, I now proceeded to examine the back of each, and this is what I found thereon. The gentleman's photo contained, underneath the words "presented to", the name and Los Angeles address of a lady, while on the back of the other was simply Mexico City, 1927.

Not being the name and address that the old woman had given me, although she told me she had found the coin, I decided to investigate, as it was more likely that she had stolen it from the lady whose picture it contained, and whose name and address was on the gentleman's picture.

I decided to investigate at once, so that evening, on closing the office, I went directly to the address given, and was soon in a very aristocratic neighborhood, and before the door of a very beautiful home.

On ringing the bell, and asking to see the young lady whose name I presented, I was admitted and offered a seat in the drawing room. Presently she appeared, and I recognized her at once from the picture in my possession. After introducing myself I asked if she knew the old woman, from whom I had purchased the coin.

After I had mentioned the name and address, and had given her a description of her appearance, when she called upon me the day before, she informed me that she not only did not know her, but had never even heard of a name like hers, or the street upon which she lived.

As she was very anxious to learn why I asked about the party in question, I enquired if she had recently lost anything, or possibly been robbed.

At once her face brightened, she became very much excited, telling me she certainly had been robbed, or in some mysterious manner, had lost a considerable sum of money, some valuable papers, and a number of trinkets,

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which she valued more than the money, for sentimental reasons.

She was at a loss to account for their disappearance. She missed them while on her way home from a trip to her bank, where she had removed them from her deposit box, expecting to return them later on. She said she was very anxious to find them, and was willing to pay a substantial reward for their recovery.

I had her give me a list of what she had lost, and also a few incidents of her trip home and whom she had come in contact with, who could have possibly robbed her.

She briefly stated the particulars, and while she gave me a minute discription of all that occurred, she did not put any stress upon the old woman's liability of being the thief.

Of course, the knowledge I had, placed me in a position to suspicion the old woman very much, in fact, I made up my mind then and there, that in some mysterious manner she had been able to empty the purse, unknown to those about her, never-the-less I did not make my suspicions known to the young lady.

The list she gave me included a Mexican 20 peso gold piece which had been given to her while on a visit to Mexico City, during the Fall of 1927, by a very prominent Mexican official and which she valued very highly, for sentimental reasons.

She gasped with surprise at this point in the conversation, for I produced the coin from my pocket and handed it to her. She eagerly grasped it and immediately pressed it to her heart, with affection, while tears came to her eyes. She lowered the coin and immediately pressed the loose ring to the edge, and instantly the lid flew open, showing the gentleman's photo, and removing it, her likeness appeared, showing beyond doubt she was the owner of it. She was so happy she nearly threw her arms around me, but restrained herself, and begged me to tell her where I had gotten it.

I lost no time giving her the particulars, handed her my card, then told her I was going to try to locate the old woman and possibly secure the valuable papers, if not the money. I had no time to lose, for if the address given me was correct, she would not remain there very long, for fear of discovery, and if she changed her loca-

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tion I would most assuredly lose track of her.

On my departure the young lady assured me of her appreciation, and asked me to call the next day, as she was very anxious to learn the result of my investigation. She did not care for the money but wanted the papers, which were of great value to her. I promised her I would do my best to recover them and to keep her posted as to the progress of my investigation. I admonished her to keep secret what had occurred, as publicity might injure my chance of success.

THE THIEF IN HER DEN

I hastily departed from the beautiful residence, with its wonderful surroundings, its beautiful lawn and shrubbery, and boarding the first car that came along, I was soon in the vicinity of the address which the old woman had given me. My, what a contrast. I was now in a section of the city containing numerous old apartment and lodging houses. At last I found the number given me, and discovered it to be a five-story frame rooming house, badly in need of paint. There was no space in front of the place as it was built directly on the street, and the entrance required the climbing of a few steps. These I mounted and was soon in the hall, ringing the bell for the landlady.

After waiting quite a while she appeared from a room nearby and inquired what I wanted. I asked for the party whose name I had, but was emphatically told that no one by that name had a room in her house. She said she knew every woman in the place and none of them answered the description of the woman I was looking for. And that was that. I continued to question her, and described the party several times, but to no avail, as she declared up and down that there was no woman of that description living there.

I therefore decided upon a different plan and left the house. Stopping at a nearby drug store I phoned Central Police Station. After I had explained the case to the desk sergeant, he informed me that an officer would be over with a search-warrant at once. In a few minutes the officer appeared on the scene, and we quietly entered the house, seemingly unobserved by any one, although we expected to have trouble with the landlady.

We visited room after room, without success, and

finally came to room No. 11, but we received no answer when we knocked at the door. After knocking several times, without result, the officer produced a bunch of skeleton keys and unlocked the door. We entered the room, which was very dingy looking and untidy, and as one window only was open, and that only a few inches, the atmosphere was anything but pleasant. In a far corner of the unsanitary room, which was quite dark, we found an old couch, very antique looking and worn, on which was some object, the identity of which we were not sure. We hesitated a few seconds before investigating. On approaching the couch we discovered the body of a woman, if not dead, she was at least dead to the world. She was lying on her side, with her face to the wall, and as we drew nearer we found that she was completely under the influence of liquor, and on a table near by was a partly filled bottle with an empty glass by its side.

On turning her over and scrutinizing her face closely, I recognized her as the old woman who had sold me the coin, which ultimately led to her discovery.

The officer and myself were both very much pleased at our success in locating her, and as she was entirely unconscious and apt to stay in that condition for some time, we examined the place at our leisure.

We concluded that she was about to leave, as soon as she had recovered from her stupor, as her valise was packed and her hat and coat were on a chair beside it.

First of all we examined the valise but did not find anything of much value. There was no money, except a small amount of change, amounting to less than a dollar, all told.

We went carefully over the entire place, examining everything we ran across, but could not find the valuable papers for the young lady. We even turned the worn-out rug back and glanced as far underneath as possible, with a bare chance of finding something interesting.

As we had examined everything in the room, without success, we about decided to give up the search, when an idea came to me which the officer thought was a good one, and we opened the door and went along the hall to the rear, where we located an old trash box, filled with all kinds of rubbish. We quietly carried this into the

room and dumped it upon the floor near a window where we could see the contents, as we sorted it over. To our delight we found the missing papers and other trinkets, which were together in a small paper bag, which we would have overlooked, had we not made such a thorough search, examining each tiny scrap of paper, hoping to run across some clue or other that might prove valuable.

We left the rubbish where it was upon the floor for the landlady to attend to, and as I was passing the chair, on which the old woman had laid her coat, I accidentally knocked it off, and it fell upon the valise setting beside it. As it made a peculiar noise, that an ordinary piece of apparel would not produce, falling as it had, I examined it again, as the previous examination only went as far as the pockets. To my surprise I discovered the secret of how the young lady had been relieved of her valuables.

As we had now found the papers and trinkets, and discovered how the trick was turned, I was left in charge of the room, while the officer phoned for the police ambulance, and when it arrived the still stupefied woman, and her effects were transferred to headquarters. This caused quite a commotion in the neighborhood and brought forth the landlady who had been entirely ignorant of our presence in the building, up to that time. She was promptly arrested and taken to the station by my co-worker, the officer.

After this had been accomplished, I made a return visit to the young lady's home, and with a great deal of pleasure, informed her I had recovered her valuable papers, and they and the other articles she lost were in the safekeeping of the police, and would be returned to her in due time, according to law.

She was pleased beyond words, and offered to pay me any amount I asked for my trouble. I assured her I really enjoyed the adventure and excitement caused thereby, and the pleasure of making her happy was reward in itself to me. I told her I was as much pleased as she herself, not only over finding her papers, but discovering the secret of how she lost them.

She fairly gasped at this last statement, and begged me to tell her at once how it all happened.

After explaining every detail of the day's adventure, which she relished very much I finally came to the acci-

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dental fall of the coat, from the chair onto the valise, and discovery of the secret. In the right hand coat sleeve I found a peculiar contraption, a mechanical arm, complete with a gloved hand, and so arranged that the owner could hold it quietly in her lap, and at her leisure pick the pockets or purses of unsuspecting passengers, with the real hand, which was free to perform at her will and pleasure.

The young lady was greatly surprised, and almost stunned by this revelation to which she had listened with intense interest. She said she had a faint recollection of a slight pressure on her lap, during a sudden stop of the car on her way home, but as the old woman had leaned against her pretty hard at the time, her attention was momentarily attracted from the incident, and she did not give it a second thought.

I came to the conclusion from her statement, that, in all probability, this was the critical point, when the purse was opened, and of course, from that time on it was an easy matter for her to remove its contents, piece by piece.

As a reward for my trouble, I simply asked her to have a duplicate made of the gold piece I had recovered for her, and to refund the amount I had paid the old lady.

This she did in the course of time, true to her word but, what pleased me most, she threw her arms around me, as I left her, that never-to-be-forgotten afternoon, and planted a kiss from her ruby lips, right smack upon—Yes, wifey dear, it is time to go to bed.”

“But, Daddy, what did you do with the gold coin the lady gave you?”

“Well, Pauline, that’s a long story, but very interesting and I will tell you all about it later on, if you will remind me.”

“Thanks a lot, Daddy. I won’t forget. Good night.”



Night Two

The evening was quite chilly, and the Old Coin Man was seated in his accustomed chair near the fireplace, when Pauline entered the room, and approaching him, remarked:

"Well, Daddy, are you going to tell us another story tonight?"

"Did your friends like my last one, Pauline?"

"They certainly did, Daddy. They wouldn't let me quit until I had finished it, and believe me, I had to read awfully fast towards the end or we would have been late. You see, I served it for dessert during lunch time, to a bunch of girl friends."

"That was very nice of you, Pauline; but, what did they think about it?"

"Every last one said it was interesting, and the fact that they wouldn't let me stop, proved they were in earnest."

"But did they think it good enough to publish?"

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"We did not have time to discuss it at lunch time, but since then a number have spoken to me about it. One of the girls suggested you give up the idea of a book, and try to sell each story separately, to some prominent magazine. You could reserve the right to print them in bookform later on, but at any rate if you do publish the book, they all want a copy."

"Your girl friend's suggestion is probably a good one, but I have already made plans to print my book, just a small edition of five hundred copies, which I shall autograph and number. Such a small issue would hardly prevent the sale of the stories later on."

"I believe you are right, Daddy. It takes so long to get an editor to even read a story, as it must pass through a number of hands before it is allowed to reach his desk. Then, if he should accept it, there is another long wait before it appears in print."

"That is the very reason I have decided on a book, Pauline. Some magazines print stories that I think belong in the waste-basket, and reject many others that should have been printed. As an illustration I will relate a little incident that happened the other day. Three men met, accidentally, one of whom mentioned in ordinary conversation, that he read a story in *Liberty*, entitled, 'The Weaker Vessel.' He had tried time and again to understand the ending, but was still in doubt. Both of the others said that they also had read the story without understanding how it ended. One of these then remarked: 'That is what we get for reading such trash.' On the other hand I just read a book, entitled, 'Twenty Best Short Stories in Ray Long's Twenty Years as an Editor' in which he admits that he rejected two of the twenty, when offered to him, originally, but after reading them in other magazines, he had decided to include them among his 'Twenty Best.'"

"Well, Daddy, there is one thing sure, we like your stories, so let's have one, right now. Your last was about a coin, how about one on stamps tonight? Something about finding rare ones among a lot of junk? I get about as much pleasure out of adventures of that kind, as the person that makes the find."

Pauline had her pencil and pad ready for action, so

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the Old Coin Man adjusted himself comfortably in his easy chair, and began as follows:

"Here's one about stamps, that may please you and it has a moral that should teach us to be very careful, not to destroy anything that might be of benefit to others.

A CONDUCTOR'S GOOD FORTUNE.

A prominent official of the State of California, having his office in the new State Building, across from my office, furnished me the particulars of the following strange and exceptionally interesting string of events, leading to the discovery of many rare and beautiful stamps, that otherwise would have been destroyed.

This gentleman was a frequent caller at my place of business, and usually in a mood to talk stamps, as well as select a few rare ones for his collection. So, one day, when he dropped in, I asked him if he knew of anything real startling, that would be of interest to stamp fans.

He was one of those enthusiastic collectors, who like many others of his kind, would walk miles to find a stamp he specially wanted for his collection. As this was his lunch hour, and he had some time to spare, he told me the following interesting series of adventures, in which a railway conductor, friend of his, took a leading part. The various incidents happened several years ago, just before and soon after, his retirement from the service, on a pension.

The conductor had been interested in stamps, ever since he was a young man, and as he grew older, he became still more interested, until he was, at the time of this story, what you would call a real stamp fan. His run was between Los Angeles and New Orleans, on the Southern Pacific, and as most of his time was spent on board the train, as he traveled back and forth across the country, he formed the habit of 'playing with his stamps,' to while away the time.

As years passed on, he accumulated quite an assortment of philatelic journals, and various forms of literature pertaining to that science, some of which were constantly laying about his desk causing many travelers to discuss stamps with him. Others of course, kidded him a great deal about his hobby, telling him it was only in-

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vented to amuse children, and that he must be getting old and childish. He was a good natured old fellow, and enjoyed the incidents that occurred now and then, along that line.

One day as his train was passing through Texas, on its way east, and had stopped at a small town, a traveling man got on, and as he had made a previous trip with the conductor, they remembered each other. They chatted awhile about various matters, and finally the conductor went to his compartment and picking up a recent issue of a popular stamp journal, was soon pouring over the pages.

Thinking of something he wanted to ask the conductor the traveling man, after a few minutes followed him into his 'den'. Noticing the stamp papers on his desk and that he was reading one, he remarked:

"Are you one of those darned stamp collectors?"

"Well, I surely enjoy every minute I spend with my stamps, if that's what you mean."

"You don't say so!"

"Yes, it's a fact, and I look forward to the time when I must give up railroading, and retire on a pension, and I expect to spend most of my time, enjoying the stamps I have been collecting.

"Well, I'll swear I can't see where you or anyone else can get any pleasure out of a few pieces of colored paper. I never could get it through my head. Why, I wouldn't give a nickel for a wagon load of stamps, unless I could sell them for old paper. My old dad used to collect stamps and I remember well how he spent hour after hour fooling with them. I was only a boy of course, but I never did take any interest in such things. I would much rather shoot craps or read dime novels."

"What ever became of your father's collection," asked the conductor.

"Oh, I don't know. Ma burned most all that kind of trash soon after pa died. As I remember there's still one old book 'knocking around' the house, that ma decided to keep, for some reason or other she never burned it. I suppose she just kept it to remember pa by, as it ain't no good to any of us. I wouldn't spend my time fooling around with anything of the kind.

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By-the-way, conductor, if ma hasn't burned this one up yet, and it's still 'knocking around' the house, I will bring it with me on my next trip, and you are welcome to it."

The old conductor was overjoyed by the thought of getting hold of this old collection, and assured the traveling man he would be more than pleased to have it, and was willing to pay something for it as well.

"It's not worth anything to us so why give me anything for it. No sir, I won't take a cent. I am only glad to find someone crazy enough to want it. I do hope ma hasn't thrown it away, or burned it up, as she is apt to do at any time. I will write her at once to save it for you, and I will see you again in about a month, if nothing happens."

You can realize yourself, how anxious the conductor was for the days to roll by, and he must have counted each one as it passed, until at last the time arrived. A month to a day had passed, as the train pulled into the little Texas station, and true to his word the traveling man carrying a good sized package, got aboard. The conductor who was looking for him saw the bundle under his arm, and his heart beat fast.

"Here's your darned old stamp collection. If I hadn't written ma to save it, it would have been a different story, for she had the inside of the house painted and papered while I was away and had burned up a lot of trash. This old book was on a pile she was about to burn, but when she received my letter, she removed it in a hurry before it even got scorched. My, but it was a close call."

"Thanks a lot, brother. I'm sure glad you wrote. You must have had a presentment something was about to happen, as it had lain around the house so many years, without misfortune."

"No, that wasn't it. When I left home on the last trip, ma told me she was going to have the place cleaned up, as nothing had been done for years, and it sure needed it. That came to my mind when I told you about her burning most of the things pa left, and I decided I had better write her at once. I sent an air-mail letter, for when ma has anything to do, she does it in a hurry.

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That extra postage saved the book, for it would have been in smoke a few minutes later if the postman had not handed her the letter when he did. Ma was all excited over it when I arrived home from my last trip. She was even sorry she thought of burning it, when I told her how crazy you were over such things."

While the traveling man was talking the conductor unwrapped the album, and glancing through several of the front pages, containing the early issues of U. S. stamps, puckered up his lips, gave a long drawn-out whistle, then waited for him to finish his remarks. As soon as the salesman was through he began:

"My friend, I can't take these stamps for nothing. They are not only beautiful, but very rare. Your father was some collector. How glad I am that you mother didn't burn them. They are valuable stamps, man, and I don't see how I can ever pay you, what they are worth to me."

"Don't talk that way conductor, they belong to you, every blamed one of them. Didn't I tell you, you could have them. Not a red cent will I take. Remember ma would have burned them if it hadn't been for you."

The old conductor was overcome with emotion and after arguing over the matter for a few minutes, the traveling man finally agreed to accept a five dollar bill, to buy some cigars for himself and a box of candy for ma.

After spending several weeks in carefully going over the stamps, the conductor discovered their catalogue value to be nearly \$2,500. There were many fine specimens of the early issues, and much time and care must have been devoted to their selection.

A few months after he received the stamps, the old conductor was retired on a pension, and is now a resident of Los Angeles. He never saw the traveling man again, after the eventful day when he was handed the 'darned old book of little pieces of colored paper."

Just about a year after his retirement, the old conductor finished transferring the stamps from the old album into a new loose leaf one, into which he had also transferred the U. S. from his other albums. He had the old album laying on the desk before him, and there re-

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mained only a few stamps within its covers. Those that did remain were, according to his somewhat limited knowledge of stamps, undesirable, through either being torn or for various other reasons.

As his wife entered the room, he threw it upon the floor beside his chair, and said with a sigh of relief: "Thank the Lord, dear, I am through. I've transferred all the stamps I want, to my new album, and while of course it was a great pleasure to do so, never-the-less I am awfully glad I have finished the job."

"I say, thank the Lord, too," remarked the wife, "for I have been waiting to clean your room, and believe me I am going to burn up a lot of junk that has ben laying around here for some time."

Picking up the old album from the floor she continued, "This will help to make a nice bonfire in itself, so if you are through with it, out it goes."

"No, no, dear, dont' burn that up! I left a few stamps in it and intend to give it to some one. It would be a shame to burn it, and I am sure someone would like it, even if it is practically worthless."

"There you are, you can't bare to burn any trash, no matter how useless it is. Well to please you, I will put it in the Goodwill bag. They will see that someone gets it. You never do want to throw anything away, and if I only would let you alone, you would not be able to turn around in your room, for the junk you would have piled about you."

"Yes, dear, but remember how near this beautiful lot of stamps came to going up in smoke, and because the traveling man's mother thought just like you do. That ought to be a lesson to you, and you should never burn anything in the way of trash, that there would be any chance whatever of someone else wanting. Throw it away, if you must get rid of it, but please don't burn it."

"All right, all right, in the Goodwill bag it goes. But it seems to me that if you, did not care for it, no living person would."

SAVED BY A BAG.

The Goodwill bag, with the old album and its discarded, worthless stamps, arrived at headquarters in due time and as the contents were dumped upon the floor,

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and sorted over, one of the men in charge of the department remarked: "Here's an old stamp album, Bill. It's all shot to pieces, with no stamps left, yes, here is a few, mostly torn or damaged it seems. May be that fellow that drops in occasionally after stamps may want it. I'll put it over here in the corner of this shelf, so you can find it if he comes in. I promised to save anything that we get hold of along that line until he sees it. It isn't worth anything but if he wants to give us something for it, 'twill be O. K. with me, but if he don't, tell him to take it along anyway, as it's no good to us, as it's 'Old and Only in the Way', as the old song goes."

About a week later the stamp man called and was shown the album by Bill, who threw it upon the counter saying, "Is this of any use to you?"

The man picked it up carefully and glanced through its pages, examining each of the few remaining stamps with his glass, and as he was a real expert, nothing escaped his eagle eye. After a half hour spent in this way, he closed the album and remarked to Bill, who had almost forgotten the man was there, as he had been busy sorting over some other 'trash' that had just arrived: "How much do you want for the album?"

"Oh, it isn't worth much, I guess, give us anything you care to, if you want it at all."

"Well I guess I can use some of the stamps, but the album's no good, so here's a little donation to the treasury of the Goodwill Industries."

"How much shall I take out? I don't believe I can change it at all. Have you any small change?"

"Oh, keep it all, brother, it's worth ten bucks to me, for I found several cracked-plate stamps among the junk, that I can use very nicely. Some collector unfamiliar with such varieties doubtless overlooked them. They are cut rather close, but as I specialize in such varieties, I am tickled to death to get them. I will be in again in the near future. Hold anything you get for me, will you please?"

"I'll say we will, my this ten dollars is a pickup for us during these hard times. If you're satisfied, we are more than satisfied."

"Where did you get the old album, brother?"

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"The bag it was in, came from the wife of an old railway conductor. She said she was ashamed of some of the trash it contained but her husband was opposed to burning up such things, so she put them in the bag to please him."

THE EXPERT'S OVERSIGHT.

The old delapidated album arrived at the expert's home, held tightly under his arm, and as he unwrapped it his wife remarked:

"What have you got there, John, another old stamp album?"

"Yes dear."

"It seems to me you have always got plenty of money to buy stamps and albums with, but when I need a new dress or hat, it's a horse of another color."

"Yes dear, but this is a real bargain I picked up at the Goodwill Industries, where it arrived in one of their bags. The poor nut who threw it away overlooked some mighty nice stamps, he doubtless thought were worthless. See here, dear, six cracked plate stamps, all different, catalogueing about sixty dollars each. I only paid ten dollars for the album and the few stamps it contains; it is true, but they seemed to think I was giving them a ten spot for nothing. It doesn't hurt my conscience, though, for if I had not bought it after examining it carefully, the chances are it would sooner or later have been thrown into the rubbish heap and burned to ashes. It makes me shudder to even think of destroying these rarities. You see dear, this is where I profit by my knowledge of stamps. The difference in what the stamps are worth and what I voluntarily paid for them, was earned through my knowledge of such unusual varieties. I dare say not one out of ten thousand collectors have even seen a single copy of a cracked plate stamp, and these copies I discovered would have been lost for ever if I had not accidentally found them where they had been discarded by a collector, as worthless. To prove that I am right in the above assertion, I will give you an example of how ignorant, even some stamp dealers are, so you can form your own opinion about the average collector.

On my way home I met a friend and asked him to

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show one of these six rare stamps to a very prominent dealer to see what he would offer for it, and to see what he knew about such rarities. This dealer stated after examining it, that it was only a scratched-plate stamp and not of any value whatever. To show that he was mistaken I will show you the stamp and the photograph of the plate from which it was printed and you can judge for yourself." He turned to page 49, of Types and Plates of the U. S. One Cent Stamp, of 1851, and had his wife compare his stamp with plate No. 12L2.

"I can see that myself, John, they are exactly alike. Where did you get this book?"

"I bought it years ago, while making a study of cracked-plate stamps and it cost a dollar and a half. That's money well spent, my dear, don't you think so?"

"Yes, John, I realize money you spend for stamps, and knowledge about them, is of course a good investment, but don't you ever think that I need a new dress, at least once in a while?"

"I know you need a new dress right now, my dear, and to show you that I am a good sport, I am going to add a few duplicate stamps from another album, to the few remaining in the one I just bought, and then sell it for enough to buy you a dress."

A VERY EXPENSIVE DRESS.

When John came home to dinner the next evening, he kissed his wife affectionately, then handed her a crisp ten dollar bill.

"Thanks John, and is it all for me?"

"It certainly is. I sold the old album to a collector for ten dollars, and he seemed very glad to get it at that price. I told him he was welcome to anything rare he ran across, as I had found a number of rarities myself, in this same album, and had decided to pass it along."

About a week later, as John was walking down Figueroa street, he was accosted by the new owner of the conductor's 'darned old book of stamps', that 'knocked around' the traveling man's house for so many years, and barely escaped going up in smoke.

The man stopped, shook John's hand in a friendly sort of way, and with a broad grin said:

"So you passed the old album on to me, did you?"

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You thought it was a huge joke when you told me, I was welcome to anything rare I ran across. Come along over to the office, I want to show you something."

"Well, of course, when I sold you the album it was yours, and I had no claim on anything you might run across, but you knew there wasn't a chance in the world of finding anything rare after I had gone through it. I said what I did to encourage you to form the habit, of being thorough in your examination of anything that falls into your hands, for as a beginner you might overlook something of real value. You get my idea, don't you brother?"

"I understand you perfectly, and I am very much obliged to you for your kind and valuable suggestion. But what seems so funny, and makes me laugh, is this. How could a stamp expert like you, who examines everything so carefully, overlook such rare beauties as these, and be satisfied with a few others, just because they were printed from a cracked plate."

The men had reached the office and stood before a desk, as the last sentence was spoken, and John was fairly stunned at what he saw before him. There were eleven blocks of the square stamps of 1869, in mint condition, catalogueing \$1747.50. As soon as John could get his breath, he inquired:

"My Lord, man, where did you get them?"

"From the old album I bought of you."

"Don't kid me. It's impossible."

"Oh, yeah, let me explain."

This was the explanation, which caused John to wilt, as an expert, for he realized its full meaning.

Handing John the ten dollars for the album, he took it home, and after dinner, unwrapped it and laid it on the table. He opened it up and started to examine its contents, when the wife remarked:

"If you are going to have that thing on my table, you will have to take off that dirty, old rag of a cover. Who knows what old hole it came from. You ought to know better than to bring a thing like that into the house."

"It's not dirty dear, only worn and faded, but if you are afraid of germs, let's take it off quick, before they get all over the house. Get me the shears, please."

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Quickly the ancient, discolored threads, that had served their purpose for so many years, were parted, and as the old gingham cover was being removed, a small brown envelope was exposed to view, tightly glued to back of the album.

The flap was lifted, and the young man held his breath as he peered inside. There were the wonderful stamps he had just shown John. No doubt they had even been forgotten by the traveling man's father, years before he passed away. In those days blocks of unused stamps were not valued by collectors, as they are today.

When John was convinced of the truth of the matter, he acknowledged the joke was on him, and he heartily congratulated the fortunate young man, although the wife deserved the credit."

As Pauline had the last words of her father, safely recorded in shorthand, upon her pad, she raised her eyes and remarked:

"My, but that was interesting, Daddy. I only wish it was longer. Wouldn't it have been just too bad if any of those wonderful stamps had been destroyed."

"Yes, Pauline, how sad it would have been. I would rather give my entire collection of United States stamps to some worthy person, free of charge, rather than have a few of the rarest destroyed by fire, or in any other way. If you will remind me, I will tell you another story along this line, that happened recently in Hollywood."

"Thanks, Daddy, I'll remind you. Good night."



Night Three

The Old Coin Man was reading the Evening Herald as Pauline entered the room and took a seat beside him, before the crackling logs that burned briskly in the fireplace. The cold rain that was falling outside this December night, caused the fire to feel unusually inviting.

"Come Daddy, lay down your paper for we're all ready for another yarn. You know you promised to tell us one this evening about the time, when I was a little girl, and you made a trip one dark night, blindfolded, with two strange men, and even mother did not know where you were."

"That's right, Pauline, I did promise to tell you about that strange adventure tonight, and although I told mother all about it at the time, it was so interesting I don't suppose she will object to hearing it again. I frequently read a story twice and sometimes enjoy it more the second time. As this is a long story I will try to make it as brief as possible, but I think some of the

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details are very necessary, to make it real interesting, and I would much rather include them all."

"For my part, I say give us the details, Daddy, all you can remember, for sometimes I enjoy the seemingly unimportant incidents, as much as the main facts, and besides, I think they are really necessary in a story of this kind. It's real chilly tonight, and the fire feels so good, I am quite sure we will all enjoy an unusually long one, I am certain I shall at least."

"Very well, then, as it is your wish, I will try to make it interesting, at the expense of brevity, but it will surely be a lesson to me, if I catch any of you napping."

"No danger of that Daddy, you old kidder. Just make it interesting and we'll all be wide awake when you finish."

The Old Coin Man laid aside his paper, gazed absent-mindedly at the fire, then looking up, noticed an anxious look on Pauline's face and began slowly to relate the following series of interesting events, that happened many years ago:

"Once upon a time, as the old story goes, I was intensely interested in a coin I had just ran across, the like of which I had never seen, or even heard of. I was so interested I really forgot where I was, or what was going on around me, when I was suddenly brought to my senses, by an old man with a squeaky voice, appearing directly in front of me, and addressing me by name. I gave a little jerk and almost dropped the coin I was examining, so sudden was the interruption and so unusual looking was my visitor.

He had snow-white hair and was half bent with rheumatism, or old age, and seemed to be very nervous. To my knowledge I had never seen the old man before, as he addressed me by name and held out a hand that shook like a leaf, as if he was an old friend, whom I had not met for years.

Quickly recovering from the shock I experienced, when I first saw him standing before me, I shook his hand, asked him his name, and bid him be seated.

"My name is John Smith, for convenience, but Mr. Burks, I have come on an errand of secrecy, and I will not divulge my real name at present, for certain reasons,

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which you will learn later on, I hope.”

“Very well, Mr. Smith, what can I do for you?”

My visitor then informed me that he had heard of my knowledge of ancient coins and relics, and had selected me, after considerable investigation, as one he could trust, to aid him in a matter of much importance to him, and which was occupying his mind at the present time. He had been waiting an opportunity to see me privately, and having noticed that I was alone at the time, he decided to approach me. He wished to meet me and arrange for an appointment, in the utmost secrecy, at which future conference he would disclose his proposition for my consideration.

I informed him that it was after my usual closing time, and as there was no one around, I would lock the door, and we could retire to my private office, where we could freely discuss matters, without fear of being interrupted. This seemed to please the old man, and with a sigh of relief he followed me into my office, and when I had closed the door, and we were seated, he made the object of his visit known, gradually, in the following manner:

First, he asked me if I had a knowledge of the early gold coins of Mexico, as well as those of Spain? Was I able to catalogue and place a value upon them? I informed him that I was quite sure I could serve him along that line. Was I sufficiently informed along archeological lines to place a value upon objects of gold, such as idols, statuettes, also precious stones, alabaster, pearls and jade ornament, and such treasure, taken from a Mixtic tomb in southern Mexico? I was forced to answer no, although I had studied considerably along that line, and even owned a valuable female idol from that section of the country, namely Mitla, state of Oaxaca. On learning this he seemed to think that I knew enough about the value of such objects to be of much use to him regardless of the way I felt about the matter. At least he seemed well pleased, as far as we had progressed, but now asked me a startling question, which I was not expecting, and therefore was not ready to answer on the spur of the moment.

Would I be willing to accompany him and a friend,

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blindfolded, to a place, where they had much treasure stored, the location of which must, from its very nature, be kept secret? They were desirous of learning its value, where and how to dispose of it, and other information along that line.

Of course I was very much in doubt as to my safety, in making such a trip, especially with total strangers, and entirely at their mercy. Naturally I hesitated, and did not answer at once, as I had the other questions, so he could see very clearly that I was not in favor of accepting his proposition. In fact, I had already made up my mind that, if this was what my visitor expected of me, he had approached the wrong individual.

He was quick to notice this from my looks, but assured me very earnestly, that I would be perfectly safe in placing myself in his keeping, and he would reward me handsomely for my trouble. I would be absent less than forty-eight hours from my family, and would be well taken care of during my absence. When through with my services, they would return me to a spot, where I could reach my home in less than an hour, provided I followed instructions, and with plenty of gold in ample payment for my labor and the risk I had taken in their behalf.

I asked where the treasure was located, if in the vicinity of Los Angeles or elsewhere, but this question he absolutely refused to answer, merely informing me that I would be returned to my home safely, in less than two days from my departure.

The old white-haired man must have had a wonderful power of persuasion, to talk me into agreeing to accompany him to his secret hiding place, but, I finally agreed upon one consideration. He was to give me the particulars as to where and how, he came into possession of this treasure I was to examine. After we had discussed the matter, pro and con, for some time, I decided to accompany him to his treasure house, blindfolded, at night, and perform the duties he had required of me, and he was to comply with my request, for a complete explanation. Before I would place myself in their hands, I must be entirely satisfied in my own mind, I could do so with safety. But, as the hour was grow-

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ing late, we arranged to meet the following day, at a designated spot, in one of the public parks, of the city, where the old white-haired man was to give me a complete history of his life, from the time he left college in 1893 until his request for my services.

I'll never forget the next morning, when I met him in the park. He seemed immensely pleased that I had kept the appointment, and after we had found a quiet nook, where we would not be overheard, if seen at all, and when seated, he began the interesting story, of his several adventures, which caused me to sit spell-bound, for several hours.

After I have related his story, as near as I can remember the important facts, I will add the particulars of my own experiences, while fulfilling my promise made to him the night before.

How well I remember that beautiful November morning, as I sat beside the old white-haired engineer, as he quietly related the minutest details of his adventures, during the preceding thirty years of his life.

THE OLD ENGINEER'S STORY

After graduating from the University, at Champaign, Illinois, in the class of 1893, where he had prepared himself for civil and mining engineering, he decided to visit the Columbian Exposition, at Chicago.

Several enjoyable weeks were spent in taking in the sights, and making a study of the wonderful and interesting exhibits, both educational and otherwise.

As he was about to leave for his home in the Middle West, he accidentally made the acquaintance of a party of capitalists, owners of considerable mineral land in southern Mexico. In fact they became so well acquainted that he decided to spend another week at the Fair, during which time he was engaged at an attractive salary, to investigate and report on their holdings.

After satisfactory arrangements were made between them, he immediately prepared for his trip. He was advanced part of his salary, the balance to be paid on his return to Chicago, after his work was completed.

Leaving as soon as possible he stopped over at Quincy, to visit a young lady, to whom he was engaged, to in-

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form her of his good fortune and bid her goodbye. He was just past twenty-five years of age, and having landed such an attractive position, so soon after leaving college, he naturally felt quite elated.

His fiancée was not so well pleased with his seemingly streak of good fortune, for they had previously planned, to get married and spend their honeymoon in southern California, before he tied himself down to work of any kind. He was awfully sorry that he must disappoint her, but he considered the opportunity too attractive to turn down, from several points of view, even if their plans were interfered with.

He explained that it was nearly impossible to take her with him, as much as he would like to, as the work he was expected to do, would require several months, spent in rough, sparsely settled territory. She finally agreed that he was right, and the wedding was therefore postponed until his return. Little did either of them think at the time this was decided upon, of the bitter disappointment that was in store for them, otherwise the future destiny of both would have been altogether different.

It was a long tiresome trip he had before him, when they separated, as the train left the station, and they bid each other goodbye. He had promised faithfully to return as soon as possible, and make her his wife. How sad would have been this parting, if they could but have known they should never meet again, at least in this old world of ours.

After many days of travel he finally reached his destination, Mitla, state of Oaxaca, in the valley of Tlacolulu, about twenty miles southeast of the town of Oaxaca, in the extreme southern part of Mexico, where are located the palaces of Mitla, former abode and place of burial of the Zapotec kings. He arrived the latter part of October, after traveling in various ways, changing before the end, from horseback to a rude cart with wooden wheels, drawn by an old mule, and driven by an Indian. Near his destination he passed many Indians, with heavy burdens strapped to their backs, and with broad bands about their heads, on their way to the market in the village of Oaxaca. It was a very inter-

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esting trip.

On his arrival at Mitla he secured lodgings in an old adobe hut not far from one occupied by its owner a kind-hearted Mexican, who understood some English, and was an old resident of that ancient village.

He made it plain to the old Mexican, that it was possible he might be away for several days at a time, sometimes even longer, and he did not wish anything to be disturbed, while he was away. This, the honest old man agreed to, besides promising to see that no one else molested anything about the place.

After he was settled and had entered upon his duties, his work gradually took him farther, and farther, from his lodgings. Frequently he remained over night, and slept in the open, wrapping himself in an army blanket, he carried on most of his trips. He was a great lover of outdoor life, and as the weather was delightful, he enjoyed his work immensely.

On one of these longer trips, in a very rough and out of the way section of the country, he accidentally stepped into a small hole in the underbrush, which held his foot so firmly, he at first, thought he had been caught in a trap of some kind or other. The incident so excited his curiosity that, on extracting his foot, he decided to investigate. Ordinarily he would not have given it a second thought.

He marked the exact spot with a dead limb, before withdrawing to a more desirable place to unpack his kit, to secure a small pick and shovel, he carried with him at all times. As it was getting along towards evening, and darkness was approaching, he decided to wait until morning before investigating, and prepared to spend the night nearby.

He arose early the next morning, and soon had cleared away the thick underbrush, for some distance around the spot, that had held him prisoner the night before. The opening proved to be a crevice between two pieces of rock, that seemed to be part of a wall, surrounding a shaft or possibly an old well. Immediately he formed the opinion, that accidentally, he had stumbled upon the entrance to some ancient ruins, for he had read several books on the subject of archeology, during his studies at

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college, and realized how important some such insignificant discovery might prove to be. He set to work with enthusiasm, and as he continued his labors, he became more and more positive, that he was right. He had undoubtedly discovered the entrance to some shaft or passage, which sloped at an angle of approximately forty-five degrees, and seemed to have been hidden for many years, if not for ages, by an accumulation of dirt and decayed vegetation.

After progressing far enough to satisfy himself that he had really discovered something worth while, he decided to postpone his efforts for the present, at least, until he had finished the work of his employers. From then on, he was at liberty to pursue his archeological research, as long as he liked, for his time was his own.

He covered the hole completely, by the use of dead limbs and decayed vegetation, so it would not attract attention, in case anyone did happen to pass that way, which was very improbable, as it was in such a wild and unfrequented part of the country. He was soon on his way, as if nothing had happened, although he often wondered what the result of his discovery would be, and many and varied were the fantastic ideas that flashed through his mind.

It required about two weeks to finish the work he had been engaged to do, and mail his final reports, and various maps and drawings to his employers, after which he decided to remain at least that much longer, as his lodgings were paid for, up to that time. He informed the old Mexican landlord that his work was finished, but he intended to spend some time in roaming around the country for pleasure, after which he would leave for the states.

The next morning he arose early and left just as the sun was appearing over the distant hills, so as not to be observed by any of the natives. He traveled leisurely most of the day, through wild and dense vegetation, before reaching the location of the ruins, as shown by a map he had thoughtfully prepared before leaving, at the time of the discovery. Besides his regular outfit he brought along an extra quantity of provisions, a strong rope, and his six-shooter, which he did not always carry

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with him.

On his arrival in the vicinity, he had no trouble in locating the exact spot, which had not been disturbed during the weeks he had been away, in fact he would not have found it himself, if he had not marked it with a dead limb. As he was tired from his long walk he rested until morning, and on arising bright and early, was soon at work about the shaft. He labored hard all day, and by evening had removed the earth and debris, to a depth of about twelve feet, reaching a passage extending horizontally to the right, the entrance being two feet square, and solidly packed with earth, and pieces of rock, which had no doubt been washed in by the rains of the past centuries. Feeling that he had accomplished enough for the day, he ceased laboring and rested until morning, when he renewed his efforts and with more enthusiasm than before. He now found the work much harder, for each shovelful of earth had to be carried to the top of the shaft, which was very tiresome, although the forty-five degree incline made this part of the work much easier. By the use of an occasional match, he was able to carry on the work in almost total darkness, as very little light penetrated from the shaft into the passage. As he progressed the space had become larger, until by night he was almost able to stand upright, at a distance of ten feet from the shaft, to which point he had progressed, when he ceased work for the day.

The next morning he decided to return to his lodgings, leaving some of his effects inside the passage. He completely hid the entrance and the discarded earth from view, and marking the spot as he had done before, was soon on his way to the village. He traveled in a round about way and on his arrival, visited the village store and purchased a bottle of kerosene and a lantern, presumably to read by, also a supply of tobacco and groceries. As the store keeper was postmaster as well, he was requested to return any mail that might come for him, to his fiancée's address in Quincy, Illinois, as he expected to be there in the near future, for his labors were ended and he was apt to leave at any moment. This was a precaution he took, for if he discovered treasure, he might desire to secretly leave the country, with-

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out returning to Mitla. He also removed the few personal effects from the old hut, the next morning, when he arose from a restless night, and left early as before, for the scene of his excavation.

On his arrival he uncovered the shaft and arranged the surroundings, so there was not a chance in the world of anyone discovering him at work. He now took every precaution possible to keep his discovery secret, for he realized that his very life depended upon this procedure.

With the light of the lantern he could work much faster, and continued long after darkness had set in, and as he quit for the night he was astonished to find that he had reached a distance of nearly twenty-five feet from the entrance of the passage. As he advanced, the work had become lighter as the dirt was not packed as solidly as it was near the entrance, and he had made greater headway than he had supposed.

After a good night's rest he re-entered the passage, and the progress was quite rapid for two hundred feet, or more, part of which distance was almost entirely free from dirt. On reaching this point he was surprised to find himself in a room about ten feet square, and eight feet high.

The passage seemed to be the only entrance to this room, which was entirely empty. With the aid of his lantern he examined all the walls, carefully, without discovering any signs of an opening. Placing it upon the floor he sat down beside it, thoroughly disappointed at the result of his many hours of hard labor. The flickering light of the lantern threw shadows here and there about the room, and as he sat there tired and disgusted, he thought he saw a short line on the wall before him. Each time the flame grew brighter he saw the faint line, only a few inches long, but perpendicular and as straight as an arrow. He fixed his eye on the spot and gradually approached it, each time the light caused it to appear, he advanced a step, until he was close enough to place the blade of his knife on the exact line. The crack, for such it was, could not be seen ordinarily, but by a queer coincidence the light had shown up, what the eye had failed to detect.

By drawing the blade of the knife along the crack a

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few times he soon had the line standing out good and strong. Securing his pick he tried to remove the rock along the line but found it exceedingly hard. By the use of his knife he then removed the dust from the crack, inch by inch until after several hours he had what seemed to be a door outlined. With his pick he removed the rock from around this door, slowly and laboriously, flake by flake, in an effort to dislodge this immense block of stone, six feet high by three feet wide.

After hours of work he had accomplished practically nothing, as he had only advanced a few feet and just scratched the surface, with no sign of loosening the stone. He began to realize what he was up against. His heart sank within him. He hesitated for some time, silently planning, and seeking a solution of what would be the logical thing to do, get help and disclose the secret, or try to overcome the difficulty singlehandedly. He finally decided to go it alone, and having made this decision, he put forth every effort to dislodge the stone. He tried the other edge and steadily removed bits of rock along the line, without any noticeable results. The air was so close he had to approach the entrance frequently, to keep from fainting.

He was almost completely exhausted from his long and strenuous efforts, and was about to give up for the time being at least, when he in some manner or other, inadvertently leaned against the door, and to his astonishment, it moved a little. At least he thought it did. Using his entire strength he pushed against the part he had leaned upon, and it began to slowly turn, and was soon open far enough for him to place his foot in the opening. It all happened so suddenly and unexpectedly, that he was bewildered, but had presence of mind enough to reach for his lantern, while retaining his foot in the opening, as his strength was failing him and he could not budge it another inch.

As the lantern's rays poured through the crack, his head swam, and with difficulty he remained upright. He just did get a glimpse of a large room, with walls of gold, large golden figures here and there around the edge, and huge skeletons sitting about, as if on guard. He was simply wild with excitement, everything seemed

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to be turning around, the ceiling seemed to be falling upon him. His foot slipped from the door and he crumpled to the floor. As he fell the lantern was extinguished, and all was silence and darkness, throughout those ancient ruins.

On regaining consciousness, he managed somehow or other to crawl to the entrance, where the fresh air gave him strength to spread his blanket. He placed his head a few feet from the shaft, his body extending back into the passage. He intended to rest awhile and then try to open the door further so he could enter, as it was out of the question now, he being too weak to even stand, as anxious as he was to proceed. He soon fell asleep, being utterly exhausted.

A STRANGE VISITOR

How long he slept he knew not, but during the night he realized that something was moving across his body. Slowly but surely he could feel the weight. Of course his fright awakened him instantly. He was simply petrified when the cold, slimy shape crawled across his right arm as it lay on the blanket above his head. It really was a snake he was now positive. His first impulse was to draw away his arm, slowly, but realizing that if he did so, the hideous reptile would probably sink its deadly fangs into him, he remained perfectly quiet, while his heart beat like a trip-hammer. He realized his peril to its fullest extent.

Oh! how he regretted he had ever visited Mexico. Of what good was this wonderful treasure to him now? He would gladly have renounced it all, for escape from his terrible agony. His entire past life seemed to flash through his mind, as he lay motionless and paralyzed with fright. He was even afraid to breathe, and beads of perspiration formed upon his brow.

With a slow maddening motion, the reptile dragged its slimy form across his face, and crept down on his breast thrusting its head beneath his jacket. He could feel the hideous scraping of its cold repulsive body, as it was drawn across his cheeks. It was only by a most tremendous effort, that he succeeded in restraining himself from jumping up with mingled terror and disgust.

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At last, after what seemed like ages, he felt the tail of the snake wiggling down his chin. Imagine, if you can, how he felt, realizing that the creature had coiled itself snugly under his jacket, as he lay still as death. As it was now absolutely motionless, it had probably gone to sleep. It had no idea that he was a human being or it would not have done this. As a rule snakes are cowardly, and will not approach a person except to strike in self defence.

For hours he lay with that awful weight upon his bosom, but each minute seemed like an hour, each hour like a year. He seemed to have lived a life time in that brief space. Every incident in his past life must have passed through his memory in rapid succession, as he lay under the weight of that hideous snake.

He thought of his mother and friends, his fiancée, back in Quincy, and he never expected to see them again. For no matter how long he was able to endure the agony, he felt sure it must eventually end in death. Long hours he lay as rigid as a corpse, scarcely daring even to breathe, and all the while his breast was growing colder, and colder, where the snake lay upon it, with nothing but a thin cotton shirt between it and his skin. He knew that if he stirred it would strike, but he could not bear it much longer. Even though he succeeded in lying still until morning, the light of day would cause the hideous reptile to discover that he was a man, and that would be his death warrant.

At last, the inevitable must come, and as dawn was approaching, although he was more dead than alive, he heard a noise. Something seemed to have fallen into the shaft, that ultimately proved to be a young rabbit, which struck a few feet from his head, and lay stunned. This proved to be a godsend, for the reptile darted up its head from under his jacket, as if about to strike. He closed his eyes in prayer, for having stood the terrible strain so long, he was almost unconscious, and had become resigned to his fate.

Instead of striking as he had expected, the snake, which proved to be a large deadly Mexican moccasin, brown with yellow striped head, glided away with a swift motion in the direction of the helpless rabbit.

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Staggering to his feet which were almost useless from intense numbness, caused by the hours they had remained motionless, he pulled his gun and fired. Six shots rang out in quick succession, one of which struck the reptile squarely in the head. Without waiting a second he half crawled, half sprang across the body of the hideous snake and was soon outside, into the fresh morning air.

He never stopped to enter the shaft again, even to get his effects, but quickly covered it with brush and debris, as thoroughly as he was able to do, considering his weakened condition, and in some manner, he never remembered how, eventually he reached his adobe hut, in Mitla. The old Mexican landlord must have seen that he was taken care of, as he was undoubtedly sick for weeks, from the strain of his terrible experience, resulting in brain fever, and was at the point of death for some time. Recovery was slow but as he grew stronger and more rational, he noticed that his hair was snow-white. He found himself an old man in looks, feeble and bent, and his mind was a blank, as far as his past was concerned. No one knew anything about him, not even the old Mexican landlord, as he never became intimate even with him. He had even forgotten his own name, and also from whence he came. He was a victim of amnesia. How long he remained in Mexico he never knew as it was like a dream.

He had a faint remembrance of someone taking him for a ride, which resulted in his appearance as an inmate of a certain poor farm, across the border into the United States.

THE POORHOUSE INMATE

In a poorhouse in southern California, an old white-haired gentleman could be seen, wandering about the grounds, in quest of something, something he could not find, he knew not what. His pale face showed the strain of worry or suffering and his mind was almost blank. For many years his time was spent around the place, where he was allowed to roam at will, oblivious of his surroundings.

Time rolled on until one Summer's day, he passed

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through a gate that he found open through some carelessness, and was soon upon the highway. Like a child he traveled down the road, unmindful of his surroundings, unnoticed by those who were supposed to guard him.

On he went until he reached a boulevard, where many cars were passing, here he stopped, undecided what to do, he then continued on his way, unmindful of the danger that confronted him. Along came an auto at a high rate of speed. The chauffeur, a usually careful driver, had reason to suppose the old man was in his right mind, and waiting for a chance to cross the road, so continued on. Suddenly he was horrified as the man stepped into the traffic and approached his car, making it impossible to avoid an accident. A glancing blow threw him backwards upon the pavement, where he lay as if dead. As quick as possible the car was stopped and the unconscious man was soon on his way to a hospital, where it was discovered his skull was fractured, besides a number of minor injuries.

All possible arrangements were made for the care of the patient, by the couple that owned the car, although they were exonerated from all blame. After he was able to leave the hospital, he was taken to their home, where he was treated as a member of the family.

While confined in the hospital he was often delirious, and frequently while in that state of mind raved about snakes, once he mentioned Mitla, and at other times he talked of treasure. The nurses made this known to the couple that were paying the expenses of the old gentleman. They were all mystified at these strange expressions, and wondered what they meant.

He seemed contented in his new home, and as weeks passed his mind became clearer, and finally he began to remember things that happened, way back in 1893, in Mexico up to the encounter with the snake, and his subsequent loss of memory. From that time on until the present was almost a total blank. It seemed as if he had just left Mexico and the treasure, and he could not account for the years that had elapsed.

The couple he was with, being quite wealthy, after much time and effort, discovered that he had been an

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inmate of the poor farm, and from that institution learned how he had arrived in the United States, and other particulars, of which the old man had no knowledge. The tourist who picked him up, did so out of kindness, as he was an American citizen, being without friends or money, and was lying exhausted by the side of an unfrequented road a few miles from the town of Oaxaca, Mexico. He could not be identified by anything upon his person, and he could not remember who he was, though he seemed to try hard enough.

By piecing together the fragments of the story the old man told them, day by day, they gathered enough information to warrant an investigation. They finally decided, as their patient became stronger, and his mind more clear, that they would build a covered wagon, with a secret bottom, whereby treasure could be transported from Mexico safely, and attempt to secure it, in case it was still available.

About two years after the automobile accident, the old man and his wealthy friend set out for Mitla, in their specially equipped wagon, as though they were on a pleasure trip.

Starting from Yuma, Arizona, they crossed the border, on the fourth day of August, 1922, spent nearly a month reaching their destination, where they hoped to still find the treasure intact. As twenty-nine years had elapsed since its discovery, there was a chance that someone else had found and removed it during that time.

For a week or so they posed as sightseers, changing their camping place each night, in order to throw off suspicion. Finding that they were not being watched, they finally camped near the shaft, which was located with considerable trouble, as the many years of growth had again completely hidden the spot from view.

They spent the entire day, removing the dense shrubbery and debris that covered the entrance and filled the shaft, taking turns working and resting, one or the other constantly being on the lookout for some one who might by chance appear from any direction. As night approached they had just reached the bottom, where the old man's companion who was at work at the time, found the skeletons of the snake and rabbit, which so

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reassured him that he decided to finish the job during the night. They therefore rested until after supper and extinguishing their fire, supposedly retired, but instead entered the shaft.

The old man shook like a leaf as he beheld the skeleton of the snake, causing them to carefully examine every foot of the passage as they slowly advanced, until they finally reached the end.

There was the old man's belongings, where he had left them twenty-nine years before, covered with dust so they could hardly be recognized. The immense door was tightly closed, as it was when first discovered, but could easily be distinguished by the effects of the old man's pick. It had swung back into place when his foot was removed, as he fell to the floor, unconscious.

They both put their shoulders to it and by a quick shove it began to move, slowly turning on a pivot, until they stood transfixed before the open door, gazing into the half darkened room. Reaching for their lanterns they now beheld a sight that was both awe-inspiring and dazzling. Fastening the door so it could not close upon them they entered the tomb, for undoubtedly that was what it was, and stood in silence, gazing about them as if in a trance. Neither was able to speak, for a few minutes, silently staring at each other, as well as their surroundings.

Several immense skeletons were seated about the room, as if guarding its contents. The walls of gold reflected the light of their lanterns upon the other objects, presenting them in such a dazzling array as to almost paralyze the beholder. Pile after pile of golden objects, mainly statuettes and idols, coins of unknown identity, fabulous treasure, a wonderful sight as the light was thrown upon them, in this ancient golden tomb.

As soon as they could recover their senses, they quickly decided to take no chances of being discovered, but set to work frantically, transferring most of the contents of the room to their wagon, the false bottom holding it all. Before the break of day all that remained in the old tomb, was the skeletons and the gold that lined the walls, and the tired men were well upon their way, as the sun appeared above the distant hills.

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As a precaution, they partially refilled and hid the old shaft from view, for if discovered, there danger of being apprehended before they were out of the country, would have been great.

They drove night and day until far away, only stopping occasionally to feed and rest their horses. One drove while the other slept, until they felt they were safe in taking their time. They reached the border and crossed without mishap, and finally had their treasure safely stored in a specially prepared vault, where it now waited inspection.

MY MIDNIGHT JOURNEY

As the old man had kept his word, and I was now aware of why I was to be blindfolded, and secretly transported to the treasure house, I readily agreed to an appointment for the following week, my absence to be known only to my wife, and she not even to know the nature of my trip, except that it was some very important business, this to prevent the possibility of me being followed, through anxiety for my safety.

I met the old engineer and his companion the next Friday, about midnight, near the park where we had made the appointment the week before. I suffered myself to be blindfolded, that I might not obtain the number, and was led to their car, and entering it, spent several hours on the road, at last arriving somewhere, I knew not the distance or direction. I was conducted to a room where the bandage was removed from my eyes and I was told to rest until my services were needed. The old man apologized for locking the door behind him as he bid me good night. Before leaving he placed a pitcher of ice water on the table beside me. Being tired I was soon in bed sound asleep, not feeling at all afraid, though a prisoner in a strange locality.

When I awoke about nine o'clock the next morning, I found myself lying on an army cot in a large vault, amidst the golden treasures my host had described to me in his story, and which beggared all description. I was simply thrilled by the sight I saw, or was I only dreaming, I asked myself.

The old man begged me to forgive him for placing a

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harmless drug in my drinking water, the night before, and removing me into the vault while under its influence, and trusted that I would not feel any bad results from my experience, again informing me that I would be well paid for any inconvenience I was put to.

I felt fully paid for my trip even at that moment, for the view I beheld was surely the sight of a lifetime. I now was called upon to examine and place a value upon various lots of coins and separate objects, all of gold and of great value. There were also many pearls, very large and rare, ornaments of jade and alabaster, and a quantity of precious stones. These I was unable to place a value on, as I previously informed the owners. As the coins were separated in piles of the same variety, it was necessary only to value one from each pile. Some of these were very rare, while others were common and only worth their gold content. There were about 3,000 doubloons of 1761, with a small, armoured bust of Charles III., worth about \$100 each. Another pile contained several thousand escudos, of the same ruler and about the same year, worth I thought about \$30 each. Another pile contained about 2,000 two escudos, of 1769, worth about \$40 each. There were many others but this is a fair sample of how they ran. I placed a value on many of the images, of which there were several hundred, carved from solid gold, most of which were in fine condition. It was decided to melt the more common ones into gold bars, as they were easier to dispose of in that condition.

I was so enthused and interested in my work that I labored all day, and far into the night, without resting. I was served several sandwiches and some coffee during the day, by the old man and his companion, who also assisted me with my duties. Finally as I was nearing the end, my eyes seemed to be giving out and I became drowsy, I felt completely all in, and was advised to lie down awhile. This I did, but awoke in a few minutes, as it seemed to me, from a beautiful dream, but instead of being on the cot in the midst of the bright golden treasure, I was on the seat in the park where I had received the story from the lips of the old engineer. At first I could not imagine where I was, and when I dis-

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covered that I most assuredly was in the very same seat where we had sat for hours, I wondered if it could have all been a dream. I was still a little drowsy as I sat up and gazed about me, trying to realize what it was all about, but my coat pockets seemed to be glued to the seat. On investigation I found them full of gold.

Finding a newspaper on the seat beside me, I wrapped my small fortune securely, and quickly departed for home, although there was little danger of being seen where I was seated, as it was a very secluded part of the park, and at that early hour no one seemed to be around."

"Did you ever see the old man again, Daddy?"

"No, Pauline, but I received a nice letter the next day, at my office thanking me for my trouble and apologizing again for drugging me, and also for leaving me on the seat in the park. I was placed there shortly before I regained consciousness, and he said they had, at a distance guarded me until they saw me leave the vicinity, safe and sound as the old man had promised when first we met. He expected to call upon me at some future time and thank me in person, besides he said he had a little surprise for me. I may see him again, who can tell, though many years have passed since the letter arrived."

"That was a long story, Daddy, and very interesting, I do hope the poor old man calls again. That would make another story. Good night.



Night Four

Dinner was over and the Old Coin Man was comfortably seated near the fire, when Pauline arrived from the kitchen where she had been helping with the dishes, and incidently kidding her mother about how old fashioned she was, about some things. She must have gotten a kick out of what took place, for she was laughing as she addressed her father.

"Please Daddy, tell us a real funny story tonight, won't you?"

"That's a hard one, Pauline. There's nothing so very funny about coins, stamps and the like, except perhaps, some do look funny, and some people that collect them look still funnier. But how can I tell a funny story about such objects, even if they are funny looking, I'd like to know."

"What I mean is this, Daddy, tell us a story along that line, with a sense of humor about it, that would interest collectors as well as the ordinary individual.

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I am sure you can think of something that's funny, can't you, Daddy?"

"Well, may be I can, at least I'll try my best, but if it isn't funny, don't blame me."

"I won't Daddy, and I'm ready, so let's go."

"Some years ago a gentleman called at my office and spent an entire day looking over my stock of old copper cents, trying to find varieties he did not have in his collection. As I had a thousand or more to be examined it was a tiresome job, and during the time he was in the office he stopped quite often to rest. He was a sociable fellow, and during these periods he amused me with some of his yarns.

There was one he told me that I thought very funny at the time, and as you have some sense of humor, I am quite sure you will enjoy it now, as much as I did then.

THE RAREST COPPER CENT

At the time my story begins, and the following incidents took place, coin collecting was the hobby of most of the prominent citizens, of a certain rather small town in the Middle West. Naturally there was some rivalry between the various collectors, some of whom were very enthusiastic in trying to out-do each other.

The leading dentist, Dr. John La Rue, had a very fine collection of the large copper cents of the United States, and was extremely proud of some of the rare specimens it contained. The vary rarest was dated 1799, and was one of the finest coins of its kind known. It cost him in the neighborhood of \$1,500, but he valued it at twice that amount, in fact he had refused an offer of \$2,500 for it, from another of the town's leading citizens.

You can imagine how proud Dr. La Rue was of his collection, and especially his beautiful specimen of the rarest date. He was looked up to by the entire population of the town, and his wife, being a beautiful lady, in more ways than one, became a leader in society, and the couple were very happy as well as popular.

Among the leading citizens of the town were three widowers, all of whom were friends of the La Rue's. One of the most popular as well as wealthy, of these gentlemen, was Dr. Harris, the leading physician, who

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had made John the offer of \$2,500 for his rare copper.

Another was Mr. Ames, the leading undertaker, who specialized also in large copper cents. He had often tried to purchase John's entire collection, in order to obtain his rarest specimen.

The last of the three was the leading minister, Rev. Hollington, who had just recently started a collection of cents, through the generosity of his congregation, the various members of which, in lieu of other change, had frequently deposited large cents in the contribution basket. Although only a beginner, he knew how rare the 1799 cent was, and had never given up hope of finding one, although his chances were slim by way of the regular free will offerings, if he had depended solely, on that source of supply.

Another important member of the coin collecting fraternity, in the town, was the editor of the local newspaper. He being single, and a specialist in gold coins only, did not envy John his collection, or the rarest specimen either. Therefore when John purchased the 1799 copper he received a wonderful write-up, which was copied far and wide, causing him to become famous, not alone in his own town but all over the country.

THE UNDERTAKER WAS FIRST

One day the citizens were horrified by the news that was passed around that Dr. John La Rue had been killed in an auto accident, while returning from a trip to a neighboring village. The news was broken to the widow by Dr. Harris, and the undertaker Mr. Ames was instructed to take charge of the remains, while Rev. Hollington was asked to conduct the services. John was so popular, the local florist had to secure help from surrounding towns in order to furnish the floral pieces required to fill the many orders he received. The services were beautiful.

After the funeral was over the pastor drove the widow to her home in his private car, and made a few remarks about the lovely floral offerings and the large number of people that attended the services. The widow thanked him for his touching words at the grave. He then assured her they came from his heart, and if she

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would forgive him for bringing up the subject so soon after her bereavement, he would like to ask if she would marry him.

"Why Bro. Hollington, my dear man, I never even dreamed you were in love with me, but as it seems you really are, or of course you would not have asked me to become your wife, it becomes my painful duty to inform you I cannot accept your proposal."

"My dear sister La Rue, you know I always thought a lot of you, but as you were a married woman, I was not at liberty to bestow my affections upon you, like I would have done if you were single. But why do you say you cannot marry me."

"Bro. Hollington, if you will wait awhile you will learn the reason, which will save me the embarrassment of telling you myself."

"But, my good woman, I cannot wait, possibly I can overcome your objections, if I only knew what they were."

"It is very embarrassing to me, Bro. Hollington, but as you insist upon me telling you at the present time, I presume it may be for the best after all, for it will relieve your mind, as you no doubt think that the reason is a personal one. The undertaker proposed to me at the grave, and I,—I accepted."

The preacher's car had now arrived at the home of the widow and as she stepped out, she was met by Dr. Harris, who had been waiting for her return. He had been one of the first to leave the cemetery after the services, and had rushed away as if he had an urgent appointment to keep, with some sick patient, but really his haste was, just to be the first to propose to the widow. They had always been warm friends, but since her bereavement, he felt that there was something more than mere friendship between them. He discovered way down in his heart he really loved her, and had decided to take advantage of the first possible opportunity to tell her.

He assisted her into the house and asked how she had stood the trying ordeal through which she had just passed, and if there was anything he could do for her. His words were spoken very affectionately. His voice

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seemed different than ever before and it caused a thrill to pass over her, bringing tears to her eyes. Had the doctor only known it, she would have welcomed a loving embrace, and an effort to kiss away her sorrow.

"I feel much better now, than before the services, thank you, doctor, there is nothing you can do at present."

"But, before I go Mrs. La Rue, I have something I wish to tell you. Something that has burdened my mind, ever since John met with the unfortunate accident. It may seem strange at this time, so soon after the funeral, but I feel that I just must ask you to marry me."

The young widow blushed, for the doctor was a handsome man, and of all the men she knew, he was the most acceptable to her, for she had a feeling for him that she did not have for other men she had met since her marriage to John.

"For goodness sakes, Doctor, are you really in earnest? You are the third person that has asked me to marry them, during the past half hour. I am so sorry doctor, that you did not ask me sooner, for the undertaker asked me at the grave, and I accepted his offer."

The doctor was so surprised he could hardly speak a word, but put his hand on his forehead and stood as if in a daze. He finally raised his head and taking out his handkerchief, wiped a single tear that trickled down his cheek.

"I am so dissappointed, Mrs. La Rue, I feel sick all over, but I could not possibly have asked you sooner, with propriety, but I assure you I really want you for my wife, and would give everything I've got gladly, if you were mine."

Believing that the doctor really loved her, the widow planned to test the love of the other two suitors, so the next day she called up the undertaker and asked him over to spend the evening. She asked him if he would like to see John's collection of cents, and as he was very anxious she brought them out and placed them before him on the table. He soon discovered that the 1799 was missing, and excitedly enquired what had become of it.

"Oh, that must have been the one John took to his friend's home, and it disappeared during the accident, at

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least it is not in the collection now."

The undertaker's jaw dropped, he turned pale, and was not the man he was the day before, when he proposed to her. She noticed this at once and during the rest of the evening the conversation was uninteresting, and finally Mr. Ames took his leave, more formally than should have been the case, the first meeting after they were engaged.

The next day she called the minister, making an engagement for that night and he was around promptly at the appointed time. After a few minutes of conversation about incidents relating to the death and funeral of the departed husband, he was asked if he would like to look at John's collection. He was more than pleased to do so. When it was placed before him he also inquired about the missing 1799. He was much effected by the absence of the coin, and the story as to how it had disappeared. He did not press his suit any further, and his visit was not very extended, all of which the widow noted very carefully.

The following day she called the doctor in and told him she was afraid she needed his services, as she was not feeling as well as she did when she saw him last, and possibly he could help her. She told him that John's 1799 cent had been missing ever since the accident and that she had to sell the rest of the collection to raise money to pay the undertaker for the funeral expenses, and this worried her a great deal. The doctor told her she must not let a little thing like that bother her, and showed by both words and actions that he was not interested in the collection when he asked her to marry him. He told her there was something more in life than a few old coins, and that while he was very much interested in his own cents, as well as those of other collectors, he would never allow them to injure his health, even though the entire lot were lost or stolen. She promised him she would not let the matter bother her any more, although she had been feeling dreadfully worried about it. The doctor gave her a few powders to assist her nervous strain, and advised her to rest all she could for a few days at least, and was on the point of leaving, although it was plainly seen by her that he was anxious to prolong

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his visit, so she asked him if he was in a hurry.

"No, Mrs. La Rue, I am far from being in a hurry, I assure you. There is something in my heart that seems to bid me stay. I know not what it is that causes me to linger. I cannot tell; but this I know, my heart is sad, and about to break. It yearns for something it cannot have. Oh, if it were only possible for you to reconsider my offer, how happy I would be."

"Why Doctor, I am so surprised. You know I called you in to help me overcome my own heart-aches, and here you seem to be affected the same way yourself? How can I expect help from you when you cannot even cure your own troubles. Undoubtedly we are both in the same predicament. Is it possible that we may help each other? I am not a doctor like you, but I think I can cure us both by saying, in as few words as possible, that I have decided to accept your kind offer, and that is why I asked you to call tonight."

It would not be hard to imagine how long it took, before the blushing young widow was in the strong arms of a prominent member of the medical profession. Or how many warm kisses were showered upon the ruby lips of the charming little patient. Prof. Einstein might be able to make the calculation, but it was too short a period for an ordinary person to compute.

Mr. Ames, the undertaker, received a polite but firm note the next day, from the widow, informing him that the engagement was off, owing to the fact that the proposal was made at such an inappropriate time, that she was not in a condition to realize what she was doing, therefore she felt perfectly right in changing her mind. She asked him to call with his bill as she would like to get the account settled as soon as possible, to relieve her mind.

A few days later he called and as he departed with his check, which was in full for John's funeral, he assured the widow that, as much as he regretted her decision, he felt that she was within her rights, and he hoped that they would always remain as good friends, as they had been during former years. She in return informed him that she did not have any ill feeling towards him and furthermore she thanked him very much, for the efforts

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he put forth to make the funeral so impressive.

After the proper time had elapsed the date of the wedding was set, and invitations were mailed to the majority of the citizens of the community.

The event took place in the First Methodist church, the pastor Rev. Hollington officiating. The large auditorium was beautifully decorated, and every seat was occupied, for many of those present came from surrounding towns, as the doctor had a large practice, and was well liked. The bride being popular also, many were the gifts received, some of great value. The undertaker was best man. The bride looked stunning, in an imported gown of golden satin, with hand-made lace, and was admired by all as she glided gracefully down the aisle, during the playing of the wedding march by the editor of the local paper, who was also a musician of note.

The paper devoted nearly half a page to the important event, and for many days it was the leading topic of conversation for miles around.

Now that the wedding was a thing of the past, the days and months flitted swiftly by, but the affections of the doctor, towards his wife, increased instead of diminished, as would have undoubtedly been the case, if he had married her for any other reason, than herself alone.

THE FIRST ANNIVERSARY

Nearly a year had passed and their first anniversary was drawing nigh, and they were just finishing their evening meal when the wife addressed the Doctor.

"We have been married a year next Saturday, my dear, but it doesn't seem possible, does it?"

"Can it really be possible? Time never used to pass so fast before we were married, at least it doesn't seem like it to me."

"I have planned to have a nice chicken dinner for you, my dear, and how would you like to invite some of your numismatic friends in to spend the evening? They could bring some of their best coins with them, and we could have an exhibit on the dining room table, after the dishes are cleared away, for I intend to have an

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early dinner.”

“That would be just lovely dearie, for you know I have not paid much attention to my collection, since we were married, but I’ll have to get interested again, now that we are getting to be an old married couple. Believe me, dearie, you are more of interest to me right now than all the money in the world. Still I am a great lover of coins at the present time, and it affords me much pleasure to think of mine, even if I have not examined them for over a year. I actually believe, dearie, I would be willing to crawl on my hands and knees all the way from here to Alaska to find a 1799 copper cent, like the one poor John lost in the accident. I understand every inch of the space for many yards around, has been gone over hundreds of times, in hopes of finding the coin.”

“I am so glad you are still interested, though I have not mentioned anything about your coins since we were married, thinking that you might care more for them than you would for me. I may have been just a little bit jealous, my dear, but now that you have just told me, that you think more of me than all the coins in the world, I beg of you to take more interest in them. I will go ahead with my plans and invite your friends to the party, and remember the date, next Saturday night. Don’t make any other appointment, will you dear?”

“It would have to be a case of life or death, to cause me to miss either the chicken dinner or the gathering of my old friends, so you can surely depend upon my presence. To start the ball a rolling, I will get my coins out right now and look them over, so as to be familiar with the many varieties. If any of the boys try to catch me, I will be prepared. It is over a year since I have gone over them and my mind needs brushing up a bit.”

Saturday evening arrived and the Doctor also, promptly at five o’clock, and a delightful chicken dinner was enjoyed, by both he and his lovely wife. He helped her to clear away the dishes, and everything was in readiness when the guests arrived.

On arriving, each arranged his display to suit his own idea, the Doctor having previously arranged his attractively, in the form of a cross. Besides bringing their coins as requested, each brought a small but appropri-

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ate gift for the hostess, and these were examined after the men had spent several hours of keen enjoyment over their exhibits. Each guest in turn was thanked for his gift, in a few well-chosen words, after which the Doctor removed from his pocket a tiny box, wrapped neatly in tissue paper, and handed it to his wife, saying:

"I trust our future anniversaries will be as happy as this one, my dear."

"Oh, how wonderful! Thank you dear, for this lovely diamond ring," she cried, her beautiful face beaming with delight. "Isn't it gorgeous? Excuse me boys, but I must kiss him, right now, bless his heart!"

The Doctor received the kiss all right, possibly two or three, but now it was his turn to lose his head, for as he recovered from his wife's embrace, he was handed a box, much larger than the one he just handed her. It was also neatly wrapped in tissue, tied with a blue ribbon, and to all appearances was a box of cigars, for as smoking was the Doctor's only bad habit, he naturally expected a present of that kind.

As she handed him the package she remarked: "This present I have the pleasure of handing you tonight, my dear, is not alone from me, but from two of your best friends, John and myself. You will understand when you have opened it."

The Doctor eagerly unwrapped the box and to his surprise, found John's collection of copper cents, complete in every detail, even to the missing 1799. Could it be possible? The Doctor rubbed his eyes, yes there it was in all its glory. He was speechless, and tears of gladness came to his eyes. The guests stood silently gazing at him, and wondering what had affected him so seriously as he viewed the contents of the box, which they were unable to see. As he recovered his composure he remarked:

"My dear woman, I am completely unnerved, why, I cannot understand. Am I only dreaming? Where did you get this adorable coin? It's the one John lost. Who found it? Is it really mine?"

"Yes my dear, it is really yours. It was John's wish as well as mine that you have it. He told me sometime before the accident, that in case anything ever happened

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to him, he wanted me to give the 1799 cent to you, and I promised I would. He always did claim that you saved his life, when he was so low with the fever, during the flu epidemic, for you watched over him day and night, when his temperature was so high that there seemed no possible hope for his recovery. Our present happiness probably, was brought about through my foresight in placing the coin in my deposit box, and the little white lies I had to tell, to account for its disappearance. You'll forgive me for this, won't you, dear?"

"I am so happy I would forgive you for anything, right now, and I just cannot find words to express myself." He now put his arms around her and kissed her lovingly, then continued: "My dear, I hope I may always warrant the love you have shown for me tonight, the first anniversary of our wedding. I thank you and our friends who are gathered with us, for this wonderful evening, which I am sure I shall never forget. Out of love for you and respect for the memory of our departed friend John, I shall always preserve and never willingly part with this exceedingly fine collection of United States cents, which has been given into my care, and after I am gone it shall be my will, that they be placed in some prominent museum, in honor of Dr. John La Rue, their former owner, and our good friend, whose memory we all revere."

When the Old Coin Man reached this point in his story, Pauline interrupted, by saying: "I asked you to tell us a funny story, Daddy, didn't I? Well I think you told us a funny, funny story. I was so affected at times, tears came to my eyes. Some parts though, were very humorous, I think, while other incidents struck me as being very nice, but rather touching. I am sure glad the widow didn't marry the undertaker. Just think of asking her to marry him during the services at the grave, the brute. But then the preacher wasn't much better, the sly old knave, he got left too. But the Doctor, he was a real gentleman, he waited at least, until the funeral was over."

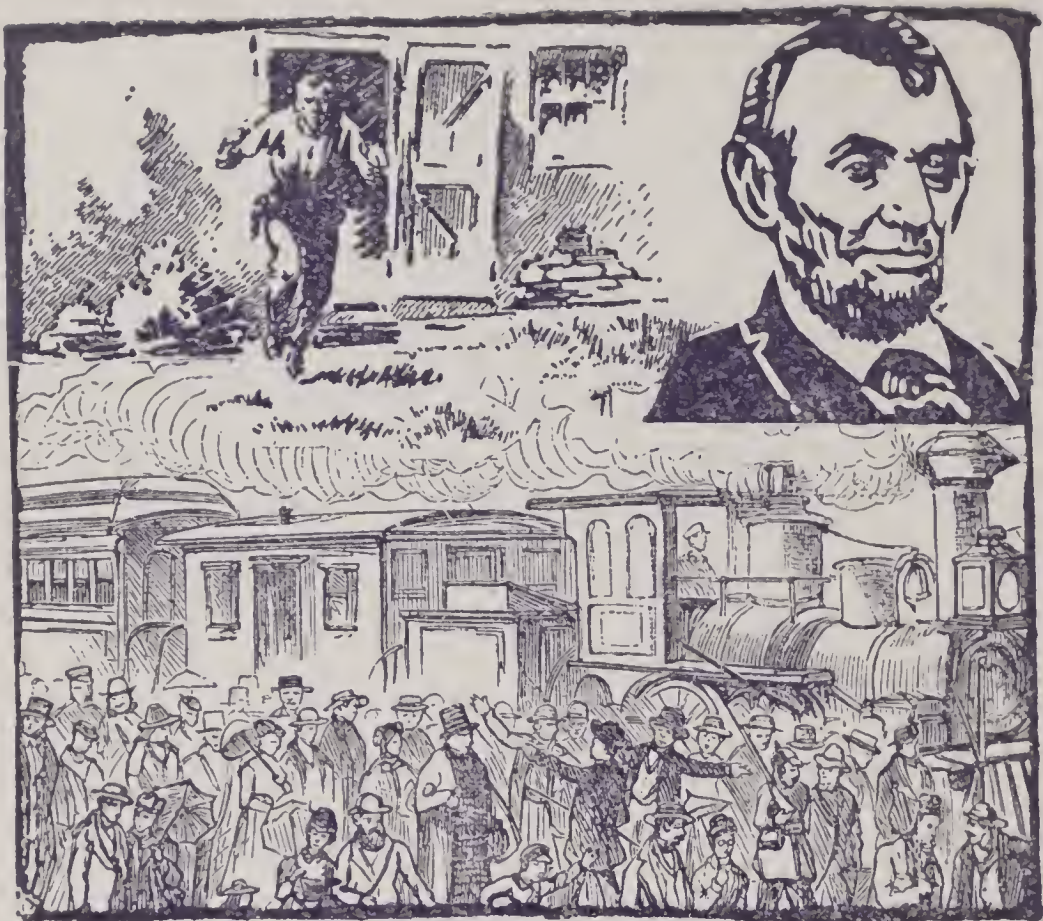
"I believe you are right, Pauline, sometimes it pays not to be too anxious to be first, like the early worm, that got caught. I will tell you more about the Doctor

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and his wife some other time, if you are interested, but it is too near bed time now. I might just say that he joined the American Numismatic Association, and eventually became one of its most prominent members."

"That will be just fine, for I am sure we will like to hear something more about the Doctor and his wife, for they certainly were a lovely couple. Thanks a lot, for the story, Daddy. Good night!"





Night Five

The Old Coin Man was seated by the fireside discussing events of the day, with members of the family, when Pauline arrived ready for another yarn, as was usually the case when she discovered he had no other engagements for the evening.

After being seated quietly for a few minutes, she found an opportunity to enter the conversation, and addressed her father.

"Daddy, you know this is Lincoln's birthday, so won't you tell us a story about him, tonight? You have so many interesting things in your Lincoln collection, I am quite sure you can tell us something nice about him."

"I shall certainly try to do so Pauline, for if there is any one thing I like to talk about more than another, it is incidents or objects pertaining to the life of Abraham Lincoln, our martyred president."

"I knew you would, Daddy. We have all read a lot about him, but I am sure you can tell us something we

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have never heard before, for instance, did your father ever see him, or possibly know him personally.

"Yes Pauline, he not only saw but had the great pleasure of shaking hands with him, though he never knew him personally."

"That was quite an honor and as you told me your father was a great story teller, did he ever tell you anything about Lincoln?"

"Yes, he often spoke of him as we sat around the fire during the long winter nights, back in Burlington, Iowa. He told us of the terrible gloom that settled over the land when the report of his death was received. How anxious the people had been for news of his condition, hoping against hope that his life would be spared, and when the sad report arrived a shadow seemed to be cast over the entire community. The day of the funeral was still sadder as the church bells all over the city were tolled, and every face showed sorrow.

One story he often told was very interesting to me, and doubtless was to others, as he was asked to tell it at various gatherings, around town, one of which I remember well, the old Peanut Council, that met at regular intervals, in Bob Cameron's Corner Grocery, Burlington, Iowa. This was way back in 1875, when Robert J. (Bob) Burdette was editor of the Burlington Hawkeye. The noted humorist wrote articles about the yarns that were spun, and the jokes that were sprung, upon various members of the organization. I will tell you more about Mr. Burdette and the "doings" at the Peanut Council, later on, if you will remind me. I might mention the fact now, however, that this great humorist was a neighbor of ours, living just across the street from us, and I remember well, seeing him wheel his invalid wife up and down the block, in a wheel chair, almost daily, when the weather would permit.

Of course I cannot tell the story as my father did, as I have even forgotten the date, but I will give you the facts as near as I can, though two score years have passed since last I heard it.

MISTAKEN FOR LINCOLN

On one of President Lincoln's trips, the train was

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scheduled to pass through Indianapolis. My father was a resident of that city at the time and of course put everything else aside to be present at the appointed time. Almost the entire population of the city and adjacent territory turned out to meet the train, with its distinguished passenger. This being such a gala occasion, every man, woman and child tried to look their best, and 'dolled up' in their Sunday go-to-meeting clothes. My father was no exception. He was quite tall, raw-boned and his features resembled those of the President to quite a degree. He may have admired the man so much as to have had his beard trimmed to look like him. This I do not know as it was before my time, but he was dressed in a black suit with a long-tailed coat, and like Lincoln was rather awkward looking.

From early morning the crowds came pouring into the city, from the outlying districts, and by the time the train was due the people were so packed around the station, that it was almost impossible to move among them. It was a warm day and the sun beat down upon their heads with unmerciful fury, and those that came early were so dry their tongues nearly hung out of their mouths. Many false alarms were sounded, during the long hours of waiting, which caused considerable excitement among the waiting thousands. Finally the train approached, slowly and carefully, to avoid an accident, as the crowd swayed to and fro along the right-of-way, almost crushing those in front, against the sides of the coaches. As the train finally came to a complete stop, they crowded forward, as all were anxious to get the first glimpse of the man they loved.

My father happened to be directly in front of the steps of one of the coaches at the critical moment, and the people were packed like sardines about him. As quick as a flash, by a super-human effort he managed to climb up the steps and finally started across the platform hoping to see the president, though no one seemed to know which car he was in. As he crossed over others followed until he was forced to descend the opposite steps and as he did so a mighty yell went up from those gathered there. Shouts of: "Here he comes,

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folks!" "Don't crowd!" "Give him room!" reached my father's ears, embarrassing him so he nearly fainted. Those back of him on the platform, hearing the shouts of welcome naturally were anxious to gain the other side, and quickly and unceremoniously crowded him from the steps, where he was nearly swept off his feet during the intense excitement. This only lasted for a few brief seconds, for just at this critical period Lincoln himself, appeared on the platform of another coach nearby. The throngs seeing their mistake turned their attention to the real president and my father was relieved from further embarrassment, or explanation. He managed, however to shake hands with Lincoln, though it required quite an effort to do so, and most of those present were disappointed.

That was a day never to be forgotten by my father, and after the train had pulled out and he had extricated himself from the crowds, he departed for his home a proud and happy man.

One reason he so enjoyed this little incident I have just related, was because Lincoln and he were both natives of Kentucky, born and raised in about the same environments, in log cabins, attending school only a few months during the year, working on a farm the rest of the time, and securing most of their education by reading borrowed books.

My father was interested in collecting anything relating to Lincoln, as well as Civil War relics. Like many others he made collections and upon receiving an attractive offer, sold them, and started all over again. As he was so fond of Lincoln, he did hold on to some items that were rare, despite the fact that others wanted them. Among these I might mention a copy of a picture made through trick photography, showing Washington with his arm around Lincoln. The name of the photograph is Apotheosis, a Greek word, the meaning of which I understand is the welcoming of Lincoln into heaven by Washington. Several years ago I noticed one in the window of a prominent Los Angeles firm, with a card calling attention to its rarity. It was claimed that this copy was one of the only twelve copies known. If that was the case mine would make the unlucky thir-

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teenth, but this statement is like a good many others you hear about, or more likely see in the papers, the owner just imagines he has something excessively rare, while there are many others he does not know of.

Among other rather scarce items is one of the old election ballots, used to elect him president, this is contained in a collection of such ballots, taking in a great many of the most prominent presidents, as well as some candidates who were defeated. These were simply deposited in the ballot-box without any marking or stamping whatever. Those of Grant, Garfield, Hayes, Tilden, Blaine and Horace Greely are included in the collection. There are a number of photographs of Lincoln and his family, a picture of him while campaigning for the presidency, and one of his old home in Springfield. There is a very fine picture of Old Abe, the American eagle that was carried throughout the entire Civil War, as well as many medals and tokens, containing the likeness of our beloved President. There is a picture of he and his son Tad. It is strange but true, that few among the most enthusiastic students and collectors of Lincoln, know how the boy acquired that name, which is a quite unusual one. Before the boy was really named, while yet quite small, Lincoln just called him Tadpole, the last syllable was dropped as the child grew older, and he was then called Tad.

A LINCOLN GOLD PIECE

To show that my father was not the only one that got "all het up" over an incident, connected with the life of our illustrious president, I will tell you about a lady that called at my office about the year 1925. She had just moved to the vicinity of Los Angeles, I do not remember her address, but she told me she had a bed Lincoln slept upon, and a three dollar gold piece, dated 1858, which he gave her.

She was living at the time in one of the Illinois towns, where he delivered one of his noted lectures, during his Senatorial campaign about the time he and Stephen A. Douglass were engaged in one of their celebrated debates. This was during the year 1858. As the lady and her husband were quite prominent, and lived in a

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beautiful home, they were asked to accommodate the distinguished visitor, as there was no hotel of consequence in the town. After the meeting he arrived and was given the best room in the house, which contained a beautifully carved walnut bed, that was considered very classy at that time. The next morning as the noted guest departed, he handed the hostess a bright new three dollar gold piece.

Naturally she declined to accept it, as it was such an honor as well as pleasure to have entertained him, but he insisted and finally she accepted it as a souvenir. She always valued it quite a lot, but now holds it at a very high figure.

She brought the bed to the coast when she and her husband decided to locate here permanently, and had decided to sell if she could get a good price for it. She said she was offered \$3,500 during the World's Fair at Chicago, but refused to part with it at that price. As they have always taken the best of care of it, she said it was in about the same condition it was in when used by Lincoln, to rest his weary bones, after a strenuous day's work in the service of his country. Though years have passed since the incident occurred the old lady was still justly proud of both the bed and the gold piece.

All this goes to show that Lincoln was a wonderful man, in more ways than one, and the time has come when nearly everyone reveres his memory, and even former enemies now see where they were mistaken, and have come to admire his great knowledge and forethought. He was a man of the common people and in sympathy with the down-trodden, and what a satisfaction it must have been to him when with a stroke of his pen he liberated the host of human-beings, that suffered in bondage so long. He was unselfish, clean-minded and an honest man, one of the noblest works of God. No one probably ever knew how he suffered during the trying days of the war, when the future looked so dark for the country, though his face showed to some degree, how sad he was at heart. I have one of his pictures, in a gilt, oval frame, hanging in my office, which has been admired by many callers, for the look of sadness upon its face. Many are the remarks that it has drawn from

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these people, in admiration for the one it represents.

One day I noticed a gentleman who stood for several minutes, silently and thoughtfully studying the portrait, and as I approached him he remarked as if suddenly conscious of what he had been doing.

"That is a beautiful likeness of a wonderful man. I am a great admirer of Lincoln, and I want every picture I see of him. The frame sets it off to good advantage, and it is just the thing for a portrait of that kind. The expression on his face is so decidedly natural, displaying his feeling of sadness to such an extent, that I was unable to remove my eyes from the picture for some time.

I have one at home I love to study, which I value very highly, although I only paid a few dollars for it a number of years ago. It was gotten out by the Illinois Watch Company, and given gratis to its customers. There was such a demand for them, that soon after they were published they were all gone, and hundreds of requests came pouring in for copies, from those that failed to get one. A second edition was therefore published and sold for the sum of one dollar each. These were soon disposed of and no more were ever issued.

The company lost many customers for failing to publish a third edition, though they were not at all to blame, feeling that they had gone to enough expense and trouble as it were.

I happened to see one hanging in a barber shop in my travels about the country, and finally purchased it for \$5.00, although someone gave it to the barber, as a present. He would not have parted with it if he had not needed the money so awfully bad, as business was very quiet at the time. The picture resembled an oil painting and was nicely framed. I am very fond of it and would not part with it for several times what I paid.

I once read an article in a New York paper, some years ago, about transferring the body of Lincoln to a new and expensive bronze case. I do not remember exactly when this was done but it must have been quite a number of years ago. Only three men were engaged in the grewsome job, which was done in secret, as attempts had previously been made to steal the body.

When these three trusted men viewed the remains,

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they were amazed to find it life-like in appearance, and on further investigation found it to be petrified. A mildewed spot on the tie, was the only change that seemed to have taken place, during the many years since its interment. These men made a vow not to reveal their secret, until two of them had passed away, so the statement of the third could not be verified. I think it was a crime that the discovery was not made known at the time.

If the public had learned the secret, undoubtedly the body would have been removed to Washington. Nationwide publicity of the fact would have resulted in, quite probably, it's resting in a block of glass, in a conspicuous place in our nation's capital."

The gentleman left after he had related the incident I have just told you, but before doing so he remarked: "I myself, think Abraham Lincoln was the greatest man that ever lived."

DOMESTIC HUMOR

There was a sad stage in his career, but still there has been many a humorous incident told about him. One of these was recently related to me by a man who claims to be a very distant relative of his. This occurred in an Illinois town near where my informant lived.

He had probably been teasing his wife, as she was provoked about something that had taken place at the exact time that a gentleman friend was passing the house, for the door flew suddenly open and out came Lincoln as fast as he could run. His wife was after him with the broom, trying hard to hit him with the bushy end as he headed for the gate. She was a trifle late it seems, but barely missed him as he passed through the gate, and on down the street.

As the friend finally overtook him further along, on the way to his office, he remarked:

"I'd like to see my wife run me out of the house like that, Abe. I wouldn't stand for it."

"Well," answered Lincoln, "as long as she gets so much satisfaction out of it, and it does me so little harm, I don't mind it."

The same gentleman who related this incident also

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told me another as follows:

"Lincoln was marooned in a small town on account of the roads being impassable, and no one could be hired to drive him through the mud and snow. He was at the general store with a bunch of old timers talking about various matters, when he learned that a boy had been accused of murder, the trial to begin the next day in a neighboring town about six miles distant. He was told that the widowed mother was nearly frantic over the thought of her boy hanging, as the chief witness, was a man who claimed he actually saw the boy commit the murder. This so touched the heart of Lincoln, that he made up his mind that he would go to the relief of the boy and see what he could do for him. He tried to get some one to drive him to the town, but failing in the attempt, decided to walk. This he did, through the deep mud and snow, and upon arriving called on the mother and arranged to defend the boy. He visited him in jail and secured such information, that he returned to the mother with the promise that her boy would be cleared, and soon return to his home. He quickly secured evidence through the boy's story that proved beyond a doubt that the main witness committed the murder himself, and wrongfully accused the boy, to clear himself."

This incident is just one of hundreds that are told of this kind-hearted man, whose birthday we celebrated today. This story is not very long but I think it is very appropriate a night like this. I hope as you go through life, Pauline, you will always revere and honor the memory of one of the most noble and lovable men that ever lived, our martyred president, Abraham Lincoln."

"I think your story was very interesting, Daddy, and I will never forget what you have told us. I always did think a lot of Lincoln, but I think more of him now than ever before. I have of course read lots about him but the incidents in your story are all new to me."

"I am glad you enjoyed what I told you, Pauline, and if you will remind me I will tell you more along that line, at some future time. Back in Illinois, in 1892, I was well acquainted with a son of Wm. H. Herndon, who was Lincoln's law partner during the year 1850. He

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was an old school teacher and a beautiful penman. I was editing and publishing a daily newspaper at the time. I will also tell you something interesting about President Grant's early manhood, as related by a former sweetheart of his, who lived in Keokuk, Iowa, when I was a boy. But as it is about bedtime I will not tell you any more tonight."

"That would be just fine, Daddy. Thanks a lot, and good night."



Night Six

"Put your paper down, and tell us a story, Daddy," remarked Pauline, as she entered the room, after the dishes were washed and put away.

"All right, what shall it be about tonight, Pauline?"

"Well, I read in Collier's, that, until recent times, Europe believed that animals had sufficient intelligence to be responsible for their acts, and they were therefore brought to trial in a court of law, when charged with the death of human beings or cattle, or words to that effect."

"I believe that statement is correct, and I remember reading the article also."

"I am glad you did, but what I was going to say, is this: Could it be possible that animals or birds are intelligent enough to have hobbies?"

"That is a silly question to ask, Pauline."

"What I mean is this, for instance, did you ever hear of an animal or bird making a collection of anything?"

"Since I come to think about it, it may not be such a

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silly question, after all."

"Well I admit it may seem silly, but I wanted to ask you something unusual, tonight, Daddy, as you always seem to have something interesting to tell me, about anything I want to know."

"I thought you were trying to ask me something I couldn't answer, but I will tell you a few instances along that line and let you judge for yourself, as to whether they answer your question, or not."

"Good for you, Daddy, I'm ready, and this is yarn No. 6."

The Old Coin Man adjusted himself comfortably in his chair, after laying down the evening paper.

"I'll begin by saying, that the article which we both read, seems ridiculous to us now, but in those days it seemed as reasonable as many things that are believed by us at this time, and is also suggestive of the fact that animals have lived, and some are living today, gifted with almost human intelligence, more so perhaps, than some people we know, or I should say, have heard of.

ALMOST HUMAN INTELLIGENCE

Take for instance, Duke the Boston bull, less than two years old, owned by B. L. Barber, of Los Angeles, a pup that its owner claims can understand nearly everything he says to it. The tricks it does are simply wonderful. It says "mamma" as plainly as the average child, cries like a baby, mews like a cat, plays the piano, sings and smokes a cubeb all at the same time. He kneels, bows his head and says his prayers, audibly. When his master tells him he is a lame dog, that he has been run over with an auto, he immediately walks a short distance and lies down, as if he really had met with an accident, his hind legs stretched behind him as if badly injured and useless. He then drags himself along the floor until told that he is so terribly hurt he is going to die, at which time he turns over on his back and whines pitifully, finally when told he is dying, and now he is dead, he stops kicking and whining and lays perfectly still. He is then picked up by a front and hind leg, and carried a few feet, his master saying that now Duke was a dead dog and he would have to be thrown away, replacing him on the floor and walking away. He would

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remain on his back perfectly quiet, with his eyes shut until his master cried "Atta boy," when he would immediately jump up and walk around the room to be petted by those present, as if he was proud of what he had done. He is then ready for another act, for he is really a dog actor. He likes to pose for the camera, and remains in any position his master places him in for a minute or more, even standing on his head. On leaving a home where he has spent the evening, if he is told by his master to say goodbye to the man, or woman, he goes back and holds his paw out, to a person of the sex mentioned.

In case anyone present, even his master starts to strike another person, Duke, as quick as a flash grabs the sleeve of the attacker, holding on until the party ceases the attack. The dog was asleep on the lap of a lady when his master suddenly raised his arm, as if to hit someone seated across the room, saying in an ordinary voice, 'I'm going to hit you, you bad old man,' but the dog opened his eyes, bounded across the room and had hold of the sleeve before the hand reached the individual he was about to strike. Mr. Barber still attempted to attack the party, fighting to release his coat sleeve from the dog's grip, but was unable to do so, although he tried for some time. Finally getting down on the floor he got the dog by the jaws and fought with him as if in earnest, frequently using his feet to shove him away, but he was at him again as if to tear him to pieces. The fight was very realistic, when suddenly his master spoke a word and it was over instantly and Duke was around seeking congratulations as customary after each act.

Duke is being trained for the movies, although too young, at the present time, and this last trick is one to be used in some scene where a gun is about to be fired, and the dog appears and grabs the sleeve of the party about to shoot, preventing the bullet hitting its mark.

I suggested to Mr. Barber that he teach Duke to collect coins, and if he became an expert when he grew older, he might become an honorary member of the American Numismatic Association. He thought it was a bright idea, and said the dog was able now to pick up

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a dime from the floor, with its lips, and he thought that was a pretty good stunt for a Boston bull pup.

Of course Duke is rather young yet, to know much about coins, but as he grows older he may develope into a real dog numismatist, like the one I am going to tell you about tonight.

A CANINE NUMISMATIST

One day a very fine elderly lady, by the name of Metcalf, now living in Los Angeles and whom I have known for a number of years, called at my office. She asked me to look over a lot of old coins she had in a small basket, and see if any of them were valuable.

She poured them out upon the showcase and as I started to look through them she remarked: "These are all that are left of my dog's collection."

You can imagine how strange it sounded to me, when she made that statement. At first I thought she was joking, but I soon saw she was in earnest.

"Do you mean to tell me your dog actually collected these coins?"

"He certainly did. Every one of them."

"Well, I declare; that seems awfully strange to me."

"These are all that are left now, although many others were spent for the dog's benefit, during its life time."

"Where and how did the dog get the coins," I asked.

"If you have time to listen I will tell you. It may seem strange to you, but if you had owned and known the dog as I did, it would not seem that way at all. Some of the coins he collected were used to purchase a beautiful collar, of which he was very proud. And a cap pistol which I took along with us, when we took trips to the woods in search of squirrels. He took great delight in these trips, and when I pointed the pistol up towards the top of the tree, and fired it, he ran to look for the squirrel. This little basket the coins were in, was also purchased from coins he collected, and he proudly carried it in his mouth, when showing callers his collection. A great many called to see him, being attracted by his intelligence.

My maiden name was Hadlock and I lived with my parents in North Troy, Vermont, near the Canadian line, and when I was twelve years old, someone gave me a

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Collie pup, which I named Bowser. There was a public watering trough near our house, and as the pup grew older it was much interested in watching the horses drink. It soon became very popular amongst the drivers, who frequently spent a few minutes longer than necessary to water their horses, that they might play with the dog, as well as cool themselves under the shade of a large tree nearby.

Bowser soon learned, as he grew larger, to place his paws upon the edge of the trough, while the horses were drinking, and one day a driver tossed him an old copper cent, which he caught in his mouth. No one could get it away from him, though he would display it on his tongue every once in a while. Later on he brought it into the house, and I saw it upon his tongue, but he refused to let me take it from him although I coaxed him quite a while. I then got a cracker and offered it to him, whereupon he laid the cent on the floor and ate the cracker. He seemed as tickled as I was over the incident. I placed the coin on a shelf near the fireplace, for fear he would lose it if I gave it back to him.

From that time on Bowser watched for coins, and seemed to really beg the drivers for them, and when one was occasionally tossed to him, he never missed catching it in his mouth. After playing with it a while he would take it home, and expose it upon his tongue quite often, refusing to part with it as before, unless something was given him to eat, similar to a lump of sugar or cracker.

As the number of coins increased I took some of them and purchased a basket to keep them in. Once in a while I would give him the basket of coins and he would dump them upon the floor and play with them, sometimes by the hour, and I taught him to put them back in the basket when he was through, and return it to me.

When the new collar was purchased, he carried the amount necessary to the dealer, and allowed him to take it from the basket, while at other times he would not allow anyone but me to do so. He seemed to understand the transaction, and proudly wore the collar home.

During the course of time some of the drivers tried to fool the dog, by tossing it things similar to coins, such

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as tobacco tags, and the like. They found out that he couldn't be fooled so easily as they thought, for he would chew these articles up and throw them away, after holding them on his tongue a few minutes.

On several occasions he brought home pieces of fractional currency, or shin plasters as they were sometimes called, that had been given him. It was then discovered that he could tell real money from pieces of colored paper, that were used to fool him with. He would always select the genuine, leaving the other lay. This was explained by an expert on such matters, who claimed it was accomplished through the dog's sense of smell.

Bowser lived seventeen years, and died while I was away on a visit. On my return I thought some of having a monument placed upon his grave, using his coins to purchase it, but I changed my mind and decided to keep the collection, together with the basket and pistol. I now have them all, though many years have gone by since his death."

As she finished her story, I went carefully over the dog's collection, containing mostly coins of common dates and varieties, but one old copper cent, which may have been the first coin Bowser obtained, was dated 1804. This rare cent was in excellent condition, and worth in the neighborhood of Twenty-Five dollars. I'll not say that the dog was intelligent enough to know that this cent was rare, but I will give him credit for holding on to that particular coin, through all those years, proving beyond a doubt that he was a real Canine Numismatist."

As the Old Coin Man finished his story, Pauline remarked:

"I call that an interesting yarn, Daddy. It really shows that animals have at least some intelligence. Both Bowser and Duke must have had some reasoning power, or neither could have done what they did."

"It seems that way, doesn't it. I have some more to tell you along this line at some future time if you will remind me. About a bird and a desert rat that were collectors of coins."

"I just love such stories, Daddy. I won't forget. Good night!"



Night Seven

"We're all ready for a story, Daddy, please stop reading and tell us one. You'll spoil your eyes reading so much, anyway."

"All right, Pauline, I might just as well talk as read, as there is nothing very interesting in the paper this evening."

Why not tell us about those Catalina Island coins you sent to Chicago the other day, to be placed in the Field Museum?"

"Very well, if you are anxious to know something about them now, I will give you some of the particulars, but later on, when I am through with my investigation, I may have something much more interesting to tell you. I am planning a trip to the Island in the near future to do a little investigating, and some of my friends want to accompany me."

"Tell us what you know about the coins now, and

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after you make the trip you can tell us the rest."

"I first met the owner of the Catalina Coins, during February, 1930. A very dignified looking gentleman, with a kindly face and pleasing personality, came in the office to see me, and asked me to examine two coins he held in his hand. He said he had been referred to me after he had shown them to at least twenty-five bankers and coin men, none of whom were able to identify them.

Both objects were heart-shaped and about as thick as a dime, the largest being an inch and three-quarters each way, while the other was an inch and one eighth by one and three eighths.

They were made of a metal containing some gold, and resembling it in appearance. The strange characters appearing upon them looked as if etched by acid, but were more apt to have been made with some crude tool, while those on both pieces were identical in design, they were arranged differently.

That fact proved beyond a doubt that they were placed there by some intelligent being, for some useful purpose, whether to designate the location of hidden loot, or to be used as money.

If the former suggestion be true, how interesting it would be to decipher them and possibly find some immense amount of treasure, buried in years gone by on Catalina Island, or in that vicinity, by some band of pirates, or one of their leaders, who was prevented from recovering it, through some unforeseen accident.

If on the other hand they were made to be used as coins, it would be very interesting to learn when and where they were made, and by whom.

The owner was very anxious to learn the facts in the case, and secure all the information he could about them. no matter what they were, so volunteered to leave them with me for several months, hoping that by this means someone might be able to throw some light upon their identity.

He told me his home was in Chicago, and he was traveling over the United States and Canada, on a pleasure trip, and would not be home for several months. He was a newspaper publisher, and his father before him. The latter arrived in this country in company

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with Editor Pulitzer, of the New York Herald, and located in Chicago. He also entered the newspaper field, but his plant was entirely destroyed by the great Chicago fire, in 1871.

He did not want me to use his name, as he did not desire any publicity, but I was welcome to any I might get, through my efforts to discover the facts regarding his coins.

From his conversation I learned that they were dug up, by his brother-in-law, a Catalina Island policeman, during the year 1926.

An old hut had burned down and the policeman was digging around near the ruins, when he accidentally struck something hard only a few inches under the surface. His curiosity was aroused and he decided to see what it was, and soon discovered the object was a small box, which fell to pieces as he removed it from the ground. He was surprised to see several objects of gold as well as other small articles. Besides the two heart shaped coins he found a nugget of gold and an English spade guinea of 1789.

The condition of the box proved that it had been in the ground many years, placed there possibly by pirates who inhabited the Island, and made it their headquarters during years gone by.

A new house now stands upon the spot where the old hut stood, and is occupied by a son of the former owner.

Mr. Wrigley, the chewing gum magnate, who owned the Island at the time the coins were found, had no claim upon them as they were found on private property.

I will tell you more along this line later on, but will confine myself to what has occurred since I have had the coins in my possession.

After receiving them and placing them on display in my office, many called to see them. Soon a former reporter on the Express examined them and spoke to the editor about the interest that was being created among the local coin experts and collectors, which resulted in an invitation for me to bring them to the office of the paper. This I did, and was asked to accompany a photographer to his studio, where not only the coins were photographed, but I also, holding them in my hands.

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A day or two afterwards, December 16th, 1931, the Express appeared, containing a picture of myself holding the coins, as well as separate views of each of them, showing both sides, and their actual size.

This article and the illustrations were reproduced all over the country by the Associated Press, and attracted lots of attention. Popular Mechanics contained pictures of the coins and an article about them. This publicity caused a great deal of interest to be taken in them, and many were the ideas advanced by both amateurs and experts as to their origin and purpose. While some of these ideas seemed reasonable, others were ridiculous, and I will tell you a number of the most interesting ones, that you may judge for yourself.

HAIRY INDIAN GIANTS

A prominent Hollywood attorney, whose name and address I have, was purchasing some articles for his collection one day, in my place of business, when he noticed the coins in my showcase, and became much interested, owing to certain signs he thought looked familiar. He studied them for some time and could not get his mind off of them. He looked at them again, and again, and finally decided he had seen similar characters in Canada, on some of his trips to the wild sections, which he had visited during his duties as a member of the Canadian Mounted Police.

He was in the English Secret Service during the World War, and had been a member of Scotland Yard also. As a mounted policeman he had been required to make a number of trips to unexplored sections of Northern Canada, where he saw carved on rocks many curious signs, one of which he felt sure appeared upon the coins, and the more he studied them, the more certain he was of this fact.

He said there was a section of the interior of Vancouver Island, that had never been entirely explored, when he left the service, although a number of unsuccessful attempts had been made up to that time, by the government.

On one of these expeditions, the party happened to camp at the side of a mountain, for the night. Indi-

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cations were that while all were sound asleep, immense boulders were rolled down the side of the mountain upon the camp, destroying everything before them, killing the horses and every member of the party.

Other expeditions fared as badly as this one, and the government finally discontinued them altogether.

It was claimed that the interior of this section was occupied by a tribe of giant Indians, many of whom were eight feet tall, and their entire bodies were covered with hair.

One explorer who attempted to learn the facts in the case, crossed the Island from West to East, and on completing the trip was found in such a condition that he was considered insane, and was placed in an asylum. This man claimed he had found the story was really true and these Indians were covered with hair and fully eight foot tall. That was one of the main reasons the authorities thought him insane.

A few years later another man managed to pass through the territory alive and he also was placed in an asylum, owing to the wild assertions he made.

Years went by, when one of the Indians, who was quite old, was found far from his supposed home, from whence he was thought to have wandered, and becoming exhausted from his travels, had died of hunger and thirst. It was then learned for the first time that the two explorers were right, and should never have been adjudged insane, as this man was over eight feet tall and his body was nearly as hairy as a gorilla.

As these men had always been considered insane, and both had finally died in the asylum, they had never been questioned seriously, as to what particular incident had caused them to become unnerved, and in such a condition on their arrival back to civilization, that no one paid any attention to their hysterical utterances.

Could it be possible that, the signs found on the rocks in Canada, which are similar to those on the Catalina Island coins, are part of the language of the giant Indians?

Could it be possible that these same Indians, during years gone by, have made trips to Catalina Island, in quest of food or some other unknown reason?

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Yes, it is both reasonable and probable, for years ago two giant skeltons were unearthed upon the Island, and recently many others have been found. The first two were eight feet in length, I have been informed, while among the more recent ones was an exceptionally long one, measuring at least nine feet. Several thousand skeletons of Indians have so far been found upon Catalina and the several other Channel Islands, those of the males averaging about seven foot in length.

Mr. Ralph Glidden, archeologist and curator of the Catalina Museum, of the Channel Indians, has built an edifice of the bones from thousands of these Indians, which is very interesting, as well as unique and is used as a museum.

It is not generally known that these Indians were white, as well as giants in stature, but the discoverer of Catalina Island, Don Juan Cabrillo, mentioned the fact in some of his writings. The Island was discovered in 1542, but the skeletons may date back several thousand years, it is estimated, although undoubtedly some of them are of the past century.

The ancient tribes that ruled the island were two in number, called Pimugan and Shoshonean Indians. For the past 50 years or more organized search has been made for the temple of Chinigchinich, by many foreign expeditions as well as the Smithsonian Institution. Although many old village sites have been unearthed, during past years the work is still progressing along that line.

I might mention the fact, that among my many curiosities and curios, I have a very long thigh bone, which I purchased from a man here in Los Angeles, and which he claimed was from an Indian. While I had it on exhibition in my show window, with other bones and an Indian skull, a prominent surgeon dropped in to examine it, seeing at a glance it was unusually long. He at once said it came from a giant Indian, and although he did not have time to compute the height exactly, it must have come from a man at least eight feet tall.

The curious coins might have been brought from Vancouver Island to Catalina during the past century, or have something to do with the white Indians that were

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natives of the locality. Then it is also possible that pirates might have had a hand in the affair.

CATALINA ISLAND PIRATES

About two weeks before the sudden death of my old friend and fellow member of the California Coin Club, Dr. E. C. Bull, who was at that time curator of the Junior Department of the Los Angeles County Museum, I called upon him at the Institution, in regard to the coins in question.

At once he became extremely interested, and wanted me to use my influence, to persuade the owner to place them in his museum. I told him I was very sorry, but the owner lived in Chicago and naturally wanted them on exhibition in his home town, so had already arranged to place them in Field Museum.

I had quite a lengthy talk with the learned professor about the probable origin and use of the coins, if such they be, and he was of the same opinion as many others who had examined them, that they were used by pirates, either as money or to designate where treasure might have been buried, in years gone by. He did not seem to think that the Indians were connected in any way with them, as so many others had thought.

He made the following statement during the course of our interview, which I wrote down, as he dictated it to me, as follows: 'It is a well known fact that pirates made use of Catalina Island, and coins of the early days have been found there. At present there are the remains of an old pirate junk, with its eye in the bow of the boat, and its ropes made of bamboo fibre.' During our conversation he said he was quite intimately acquainted with one of the prominent officials of the company that controls the Island, and had made many trips in the interest of the museum. He showed me an annual pass to the Island, which was presented to him by the officials of the company. This was the last time I saw Dr. Bull, for he died suddenly about two weeks later, near the spot where I interviewed him.

THE LOST CONTINENT OF MU

One day a very fine white-haired gentleman called to see the coins while still on display in my office, and

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he had a very large, expensively bound book under his arm. He said he had been studying the pictures of the coins as shown in the Evening Express, and about concluded that they were from the lost continent of Mu. He thought he had seen some characters, in the book which he had with him, that in some ways were quite similar to those on the coins. As I was too busy at the time to look into the matter as thoroughly as I would liked to have done, I just glanced hastily over some of the pages, but did not see anything that I thought would connect the coins with that ancient civilization.

There was no doubt but what it could be possible that the coins did originate upon that lost continent, if in fact the continent in question, ever did exist, which is very improbable, according to the best authorities. If Mu really did disappear into the Pacific, Catalina Island was, according to the map, the nearest point of land to it, excepting a few islands off the coast of Australia.

INDIAN MEDICINE MAN CHARMS

A local expert who was one of the first to examine the coins after I received them, thought that they had belonged to some Indian Medicine Man, and were used to cast out evil spirits, and in curing the sick. That might be possible, but as the characters are about the same on both pieces and are arranged in a systematic manner, it looks more like there was some inscription in an unknown language upon them. If used by a Medicine man most any kind of crude designs would have been used.

It has been suggested by someone that the characters might be cattle-brands, but still be part of some secret code, used by pirates, Indians, or some other class of people.

There is one thing sure, certain of the characters are grouped alike on both coins, or whatever they may prove to be, and they are both heart-shaped. This shows that there must be a meaning to be conveyed, by both the shape and arrangement of the design. What that meaning is, has never been discovered up to this time, though thousands have no doubt tried hard to unravel the

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mystery.

The coins are now on exhibition in Field Museum, Chicago, where visitors to the World's Fair next year, can study them, and here's hoping some unusually bright individual, may discover the secret.

A MAN WITH THE SECRET

I might mention the case of one man who claimed he could read them, and assured me they were real coins, but he said he did not have time to give me any further information at that time, but he would later on. I asked him if he would be sure to call again, and he said he would. As he left he remarked: 'My name is Hursh.' I saw his picture in the paper a few days later, and found him to be Alexander Hursh, a prominent financier, who had an important case in court, that was occupying his mind at the time. I may have more to tell you about these odd pieces of metal, later on, if you will remind me."

"It seems awfully strange to me, Daddy, how those coins came to be buried near that old hut, on the island. I think there is something to them, myself. Your story as well as the coins, were both interesting. I wish you would tell us some more about them later on, and believe me, I won't forget to remind you.

Good night, Daddy!"





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